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Marxism Today

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

JACK WODDIS — AFRICA'S ONE PARTY SYSTEMS

SAM RUSSELL — A NEW STAGE IN WESTERN EUROPE

JUDITH TODD — CAN £479,000,000 BE WRONG?

JACK LINDSAY — ELIZABETHAN ARCHITECTURE AND ART

DISCUSSION:

TOM RUSSELL — WHAT DOES MUSIC EXPRESS?

STEPHEN SEDLEY — SONGS OF THE RADICAL AND LABOUR MOVEMENT

Monthly 1/6

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Marxism Today

Vol. 7 No. 8

CONTENTS

		page
	Editorial Comments	225
Jack WODDIS	**Africa's One Party Systems** ...	230
Sam RUSSELL	**A new Stage in Western Europe**	238
Judith TODD	**Can £479,000,000 be Wrong? The Advertising Industry Today**	244
Jack LINDSAY	**Elizabethan Architecture and Art**	250
DISCUSSION:		
Tom RUSSELL	**What does Music Express?** ...	252
Stephen SEDLEY	**Songs of the Radical and Labour Movement**	255

AMONG ARTICLES IN SEPTEMBER AND FORTHCOMING ISSUES

William WAINWRIGHT	**Communists and Catholics**
Andrew ROTHSTEIN	**Stages of British Foreign Policy**
M. A. COHEN	**Some Thoughts on British Poetry Today**
David CRAIG	**Modernism in Literature**
Alan MERSON	**Problems of the English Bourgeois Revolution**
Frida KNIGHT	**The French Revolution**
James KLUGMANN	**Problems of Basis and Superstructure**
Arnold KETTLE	**Literary Criticism**

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Editorial Comments

AS take-over bids continue, so do the steady flow of writings and statistical reports endeavouring to describe them. The Board of Trade has published a series of statistics showing the values of take-over bids for the ten years up to 1961. The Acton Society Trust has brought out two pamphlets on mergers, and, now, the Conservative Bow Group has produced a booklet, *Monopolies and Mergers*. The Board of Trade has promised a major review of the law on the subject but (at time of writing) nothing definite has appeared.

The Acton Society Trust pamphlets—one dealing with the history of mergers, and the other with the impact on managers—are both useful contributions to the literature on the subject. They illustrate, as stated in the introductory note "the concern felt in this country about the large number of acquisitions".

The Bow Group booklet, on the other hand, is a piece of special pleading under the guise of an objective assessment of what has been going on in recent years in the company world.

One wonders whether anyone will be found to consider it as a useful addition to knowledge, but, certainly, it is a convenient expression of Tory philosophy, including such pearls as:

> "The enterprising capitalist earns his millions as much as the coalface worker earns his thousand a year and the skilled lawyer his ten thousand."

The Bow Group, clearly, are anxious to remove any impression that business life under capitalism is a "tooth and claw" struggle—an impression which they sorrowfully say is encouraged by

> "left-wing rhetoric concerning the financial jungle or the City. All this tends to create a feeling that the whole business is a shady if not a dirty game."

But, despite all apologies, it is obvious that even the Bow Group are not quite convinced that everything in the monopoly garden is so pure and lovely. For instance, mergers which are aimed only at sheltering the merging companies from competition, they admit, are undesirable. They would like a law requiring mergers involving over £1 million to be notified beforehand to the Board of Trade.

But, for what purpose? The purpose of the proposal, they state, is so "that the industrialists themselves should be led to consider the public interest". The notification would do no harm, but the purpose alleged is really a contradiction in terms.

Role of the Trade Unions

The P.E.P. Broadsheet *Trade Unions in a Changing Society* opens with a quotation from the speech of George Woodcock, General Secretary of the T.U.C., at the T.U.C. last September:

> "We expect that we shall first of all in our enquiries, enquire into trade union purpose and policy and ask ourselves 'What are we here for?' When we know what we are here for, then we can talk about the kind of structure that will enable us to do what we are here for."

After all these years of struggle and experience the real function of the British trade unions ought to be clear, i.e. to be independent of the capitalist state and to fight for the class interests of their members. Any structural changes should be designed to enable this fight to be carried out more effectively.

The P.E.P. broadsheet produces some useful facts and tables on changes in British industrial development, the relative importance of different industries, employment and trade union membership. It shows the decline in numbers of the unions in basic industries and services like mining, textiles, agriculture, clothing, and the contrasting rise of numbers of the so-called white-collar workers.

The essential thesis of the broadsheet is shown in its claim that only

> "25 years ago the union movement could proclaim that its objectives were of missionary urgency; defensively to protect the whole working population from demonstrable want and exploitation by the capitalist class and, aggressively, to secure a major advance in the economic and social position of the whole working class relative to other sectors of the community. Even allowing for the patchy spread of affluence in Britain, the basic ambitions have now been

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achieved to a *considerable* extent and for a *majority* of working people."

The Trade Union movement has failed, the broadsheet states, "to discover and proclaim for itself any dynamic objectives in present-day society. Concentration on increasing wages and reducing the working week," it argues, "has not satisfied the requirements of the working population." (It never occurred to the authors to enquire whether this fight has been prosecuted with sufficient vigour!) It proposes, therefore, to secure better fringe benefits, and suggests that the T.U.C. might become the central dispenser of transferable union benefits. On page 216 it declares that "a final and possibly crucial opportunity confronts the unions in the national economic sphere".

Boiled down, this "crucial opportunity" is for the unions to accept some responsibility for increasing the national cake "as a necessary condition for increasing their share of the cake". This it is (truly) stated "would involve a change in their traditional conception of the role of the trade unions". But it would not, it adds (less truly) "except for a minority of Communists who wish to profit from economic catastrophe—involve abandoning any union principles".

This slander on the Communist attitude to Britain's economic position, taken along with all the quoted passages, lays pretty bare the fundamental approach of the authors.

The broadsheet aims to turn British trade unions into an appendage of the present monopoly capitalist system, to get them to co-operate in capitalist policies on wages, rationalisation and increased exploitation, and to weaken them radically by turning them away from the function for which they were formed.

The real role of trade unions in this "changing society" is rather to fight for the improvement of the conditions of their members, to struggle to strengthen the working class and its allies, and thus make easier the victory of socialism.

"*African Communist*"

The decisions of the recent historic Summit Conference of African Heads of State at Addis Ababa concerning the setting up of a National Liberation Bureau to assist the struggles of the peoples of Africa still languishing under foreign rule lends a certain significance to the April-June issue of *The African Communist* (1s. 6d., obtainable from Ellis Bowles, 52 Palmerston Road, East Sheen, S.W.14, or from usual bookshops).

This number contains an important statement—*The Revolutionary Way Out*—issued by the Central Committee of the illegal South African Communist Party. A summary of this statement appeared previously in the *Daily Worker*, but the full text is now available. This statement shows how, step by step, the Verwoerd government has tightened the screws, taking away every possibility of normal democratic protest and "driving apartheid and oppression to the limits of the people's endurance". In consequence, "the oppressed masses are turning to methods that are illegal and non-peaceful".

The statement describes how the people's struggle is developing on a number of fronts and emphasises that should the present government persist in its course of turning the country into an armed camp, suppressing the people by violence and terror and reducing them to the level of slaves in the land of their birth, then "the only effect can be that *the present outbreaks of sabotage and violence will develop into full-scale civil war, beginning with guerilla operations in various parts of the countryside and culminating in an armed insurrection of the whole oppressed people throughout the country*". This emphasises the special importance of the present "No Arms for South Africa" campaign now getting under way in Britain.

The April-June issue of *The African Communist* also contains an important statement by a spokesman of the Algerian Communist Party dealing with the ban on the Party and explaining the Party's attitude to the question of the one-party system. This statement goes beyond a mere examination of Algerian politics and raises certain fundamental questions regarding the establishment of one-party systems in North Africa and the ideas of "Arab socialism".

The one-party system is also examined in an article, *The One Party State* by B. Pela, which examines this system in the states in Africa south of the Sahara. Further articles include one on the new programme of the African Party of Independence in Senegal (one of the growing number of Marxist-Leninist parties in Africa) and a rather full analysis of *British Right Wing Labour and Africa* which should be of special value in the coming General Election period.

There is no doubt that *The African Communist* is indispensable reading for all who would wish to understand the historic events now sweeping over the African continent. Africa, under the heel of imperialism for sixty years, is now standing up. She is not only throwing off the colonial yoke, but speaking out in her own voice—a voice loud and clear. The development of African political parties and the appearance of many new African journals are among the many signs of this epoch-making revolution. We hope to keep our readers regularly informed of developments in this sphere.

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Cuba and the United States

A steady stream of progressive books and pamphlets on the history of Cuba and the Cuban Revolution continues to emerge from the United States. Reaction has definitely not succeeded in stampeding public opinion in the U.S.A. into an anti-Castro scare.

One of the most important books to appear is the second volume of Philip Foner's four-volume *History of Cuba and its Relations with the United States*".[1] The period covered is the fifty years from 1845-1895. It starts with the early efforts of the U.S.A. to annex Cuba, tells the story of the Ten Years' War for Independence from Spanish domination (1868-78), and concludes with the opening stages of the second War for Independence in 1895.

The reader will meet the *mambises,* early guerrillas, white and Negro, who, ragged and starving, many armed only with machetes, fought in plains and mountains, wearing down the military power of autocratic Spain. The war, it is true, was lost, but as the author states, the first Independence War laid the groundwork for the later victory.

For many readers, this will be their first acquaintance with the great Cuban independence leaders, José Martí, "the Apostle", Maximo Gomez, the Dominican leader of the Cuban Liberating Army, and Antonio Maceo, the Negro independence fighter.

Fascinating as is the story of the liberation struggle, Foner's treatment of the attitude of the American Government towards Cuba is, in a different sense, equally revealing. The movement for the annexation of Cuba to the U.S.A. began as early as 1810, at that time largely led by wealthy slave-owning planters, who wanted to make Cuba "safe for slavery". Later in the century the urge for annexation was of a more directly imperialist type.

José Martí, the Cuban national leader, who started as a great admirer of U.S. democracy, came to see very clearly the role of the U.S.A. "What is different," he wrote in 1889, "is that the nature of the North American Government is gradually changing its fundamental reality. Under the traditional labels of Republican and Democrat . . . the republic is becoming plutocratic and imperialistic" (Martí—*Obras Completas,* vol. 37, p. 56). U.S. imperialism, he was convinced, would try to engulf the whole of Latin America, and start by swallowing (or attempting to swallow) the island of Cuba.

[1] Philip S. Foner—*A History of Cuba and its Relations with the United States,* International Publishers, $5.

Two further interesting volumes on Cuba have been published by the Monthly Review Press.[2] W. Appleman Williams who wrote *The United States, Cuba, and Castro,* is Professor of American History at the University of Wisconsin. Marxists would disagree with many aspects of his analysis of the Cuban Revolution, and in particular, of the role of Castro and of the Cuban Communists. But no one can but respect his open criticism of the role of the U.S. Government and his call for a radical change of policy towards Cuba. An extremely informative book is *The Second Revolution in Cuba* by J. P. Morray. The author, who recently wrote a useful study of the cold war (*From Yalta to Disarmament*), was in Cuba from October 1960 to July 1962, gathering material, and serving as Visiting Professor of Political Science at the University of Havana. He treats the transition of the Cuban revolution from democratic to socialist, the U.S. policy of economic, political and military intervention, and of the various plots and plans of the Cuban counter-revolutionaries, the "Cuba of Miami".

Philip Foner, in his history, showed how progressive people in the U.S.A., throughout the nineteenth century, sided with the national liberation forces of Cuba. It is extremely encouraging to see how this tradition persists, and these books demonstrate how broadly based is the stream of liberal opinion in the U.S.A., standing for a policy of friendship with Cuba and respect for its national sovereignty.

The Engels-Lafargue Correspondence

Some years ago the French publishers—*Editions Sociales*—were fortunate enough to come upon a large collection of letters exchanged between Frederick Engels and Paul and Laura Lafargue (Karl Marx's daughter). These were the property of one of Karl Marx's greatgrandsons, who generously presented them to the French Communist Party. In all they included some 573 letters.

Now, with the appearance of the 3rd volume, the publication of the English edition of the correspondence has been completed.[3] The new volume contains a detailed index for the whole exchange of letters and an informative "afterword". Like the previous volumes it is admirably translated by Yvonne Kapp.

[2] William Appleman Williams—*The United States, Cuba and Castro,* M.R. Press, New York, $3.25.
J. P. Morray—*The Second Revolution in Cuba,* M.R. Press, New York, $3.25.

[3] Vol. I covers the period 1868-86, Vol. II 1887-90, and Vol. III 1891-95. They are all published by Lawrence & Wishart, the first two volumes at 6s. each and the third volume at 9s.

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None of the letters were intended for publication, and, in a sense, they are all the more revealing for this reason. They throw much light on the personal lives and domestic problems of Engels and the Lafargues. Engels emerges as a man of great generosity, kindness, and indefatigable capacity for work. Even towards the end of his life he would spend up to ten hours a day at his desk. There were few active members of the International Labour movement who, visiting London, did not receive his help and hospitality.

The letters give us much information on the background of Engels' own writing, for instance, the conditions under which he wrote such works as *The Origin of the Family* (1886) or *Ludwig Feuerbach* (1888). They show the formidable work he undertook as Marx's literary executor, the long and patient hours he spent editing *Capital* and other works of Marx. Interesting, too, is the material on the various projects that Engels envisaged but never managed to carry out, like a biography of Marx and a history of the International.

Engels managed to keep in touch with all the main sections of the international working-class movement at the end of the nineteenth century, and the correspondence is a mine of information on socialist struggle in France, Germany, Britain, Austria, Russia, and even the U.S.A., that is, at a period of the formation of working-class political parties distinct from those of the bourgeoisie.

Of course, by the nature of the correspondence, the fullest treatment is of the French working class of which Paul Lafargue was one of the most active leaders, but British readers will find much fascinating material in the third volume (as in the previous ones) on Engels' contact with and view of the British Labour movement. There are accounts, for instance, of his participation at the second and third May Day demonstrations, material on the Eight-Hours Day League, much on Hyndman, comments on the election to Parliament of Keir Hardie in 1892, etc., etc.

Throughout the letters the character of Engels emerges—his great power of analysis, his shrewd estimates of bourgeois politicians and of working-class leaders, his combination of practical approach with deep theoretical understanding, and, perhaps above all, his generosity and humanity.

Study of "Pop" Culture

Professor Richard Hoggart, author of *The Uses of Literacy* and one of the most effective witnesses for the defence in the *Lady Chatterley* case, has persuaded the directors of Penguin Books to help finance a Birmingham University project for the study of "Popular Culture" and its effects. There is much to be said for such a project, from more than one point of view. Universities and literary people in our society have preferred to wash their hands of the culture to which the majority of the people are subjected. One result is that the literature discussed in university English Departments and the books most people read seldom coincide. Richard Hoggart's contention that this is an unhealthy situation is certainly true. Unfortunately, to judge from his recent inaugural lecture, *Schools of English and Contemporary Society* (University of Birmingham, 2s. 6d.; well worth reading, but will Dr. Leavis consider it worth half a crown?), he seems in danger of falling into the common sociological trap of imagining this situation can be usefully discussed without a clear emphasis on its economic basis.

With Professor Hoggart's attempts to cut through the snobbery and pedantry with which intellectuals tend to look at "mass-culture", progressive people will all be in sympathy; but analyses of the contemporary cultural situation which begin with the assumption that the basis of "Pop Culture" is that it is "popular" are not likely to prove very fruitful. The basis of "Pop Culture" is money-making. Its commercial nature is not incidental but fundamental. A recognition of this, rather than what Professor Hoggart describes as "a close sense of its imaginative working" is surely the prime requirement for any research into it. And unless any such enquiry makes a far deeper and more scientific analysis of such concepts as "popular" and "working class" than *The Uses of Literacy*, for instance, attempts, it is more likely to worsen the situation than improve it.

It is rather like, and indeed related to, the question of advertising in capitalist society. Sociological enquiries into the effects of advertising which do not begin with the recognition that the *basic* thing about it is that its object is to provide profits for capitalists, nearly always turn out to be far more useful to the exploiting minority than to the exploited majority. The Pilkington Report, on which Richard Hoggart had, it is generally believed, a considerable influence, is a classic example of the sort of danger we have in mind; for that Report managed, by blissfully ignoring the class basis and bias of the BBC, to play straight into the hand of the very "Establishment" which it seemed, to many liberal-minded people, to be attacking.

There is a serious danger that discussions of "Pop Culture", with however many good intentions and academic footnotes, may, if insufficiently based on a class analysis of our society and culture, have a different effect from the one Professor Hoggart would like.

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Britten's War Requiem—a Comment

We have received an interesting comment from Arnold Kettle on our note on the War Requiem in our February issue (p. 36). He writes:

"Listening to Benjamin Britten's immensely moving War Requiem at the York Festival has made me wonder whether the reference to it in the Editorial Comments of February 1963 went far enough in its analysis. Is it adequate to say that Wilfred Owen's poems 'heighten the Latin text musically and verbally'? This might perhaps be true of the first poem, the juxtaposing of the sonnet 'What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?', but as the work proceeds is not the effect more daring and more fundamental? At the end of the *Dies Irae* section the liturgical words speak of God's mercy, but the tears which the soprano soloist evokes are made to focus on the poem 'Move him into the sun' in which 'the kind old sun', not God, is the source of life and hope. In the next section the Latin chorus refers to the story of Abraham and Isaac, treating it traditionally as a parable of divine intervention, but the poem which immediately follows *contradicts* the story, ending with Abraham's refusal to kill 'the Ram of Pride':

> But the old man would not so, but slew his son—
> And half the seed of Europe, one by one.

"Again, in the fourth section of the Requiem, the *Sanctus*, the traditional and consolatory Hosannas of the liturgy are at once *negated* by Owen's poem, which gives a negative answer to the question:

> Of a truth
> All death will He annul, all tears assuage?

"The two final sections of Britten's Requiem are perhaps less radical in their implications, though they are no more in line than the rest with 'Establishment religion' or the kind of sentiment that sickens many Christians as well as atheists at Remembrance Day services. In the *Agnus Dei* the liturgical words are preceded by a powerful and quite unambiguous poem attacking Christians, and especially priests, who supported the First World War. At the end of this section the tenor's 'Dona nobis pacem' (Give us peace) is full not of confidence in the Lamb but of an infinite weariness. Then, in the final section, the long, complex and moving poem 'Strange Meeting' with its great key-line

> I am the enemy you killed, my friend

is, again, placed in opposition rather than apposition to the liturgical evocation of angels in paradise.

"These two final sections seem to me Christian pacifist in feeling. Certainly such religious significance as remains when Britten and Owen have had their say is so deeply humanist in content and feeling that the Mass for the Dead has been given a very remarkable twist. I strongly advise readers of *Marxism Today* to try to get hold of the fine gramophone records of the War Requiem. They repay much listening and much thought."

German Labour History

An enormous work of research is taking place in the German Democratic Republic on the history of the German Labour movement. Much has already been published and still more is in course of preparation.

For those German readers who have not the time or possibility to study the longer and more specialised studies, there is a very useful series of short well-documented books on modern German working-class history in process of publication by the Dietz Verlag, Berlin, based on a series of lectures delivered at the Socialist Unity Party's "Karl Marx School" in 1961-62. Each book is part-text and part-documentation.

Amongst the volumes that have appeared to date are those of Karl Wohlgemuth on the period from 1900-1917, Siegfried Vietzke on the years 1933-39; Horst Laschitza on 1939-45, and Horst Lipski on 1945-1949.[4] Other volumes will fill the gaps.

The first of these contains a useful analysis of the struggle of the revolutionary section of the German working class against imperialist war in the period of 1914-16, and also of the formation of the Spartacus Group under the leadership of Karl Liebknecht. The volume of 1939-45 contains a description of the incredibly courageous resistance to Nazi aggression carried on, in appalling conditions, under the leadership of the Communist Party. So many resistance groups were broken up by the Nazis, so many of the resisters killed, so many of the groups forced to work in isolation on a comparatively local basis, that many of the details of the struggle have only come to light in the course of recent research.

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[4] H. Wohlgemuth—*Deutschland und die deutsche Arbeiterbewegung von der Jahrhundertwende bis* 1917.

S. Vietzke—*Deutschland und die deutsche Arbeiterbewegung,* 1933-1939.

H. Lashchitza—*Deutschland und die deutsche Arbeiterbewegung,* 1939-1945.

H. Lipski—*Deutschland und die deutsche Arbeiterbewegung,* 1945-1949.

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"*Challenge of Marxism*" *Week*

The programme for the week of debate (November 14-19) under the title of "The Challenge of Marxism" is now almost complete. There will be at least three discussions between Marxist and non-Marxist speakers.

These will deal with "The Roots of War and the Conditions for Peace" (Canon L. J. Collins and George Matthews), "Sociology: Class and Power" (S. Aaronovitch and A. H. Halsey) and "Economics: Problems of Growth" (Maurice Dobb and J. R. Sargent).

A fourth such discussion, if it can be arranged, will be on "Democracy under Socialism and Capitalism".

There will also be a discussion on "The Artist and Society" to which two Marxist speakers will contribute, Alan Bush and Arnold Kettle.

"The Universe and Life" is the title chosen by Professor J. D. Bernal for a very important lecture which will give the opportunity for the significance and implications of some of the most recent discoveries of science to be considered.

Crowded into the weekend of November 16th and 17th are a host of meetings, large and small, at which well known speakers will open on their own subjects. These include History, Philosophy, Theatre, Music, The Modern Novel, Education, Science, Films.

For the Saturday evening, November 16th, a special Folk Song Concert is being arranged by A. L. Lloyd and Ewan McColl.

By the time this appears the finishing touches will have been put to the programme, which should be ready for distribution by the end of this month. Readers are invited to write in to us for copies and also for "all-in" tickets for the week at 10s. each.

Africa's One Party Systems

Jack Woddis

AT the moment, in many African states one-party systems are coming into being. It is important to emphasise, at the outset of this article, that *there is a considerable variety between these one-party* states. In some cases, the single party represents feudal and compradore bourgeois domination, pursuing a policy of compromise with imperialism; in other cases, it represents the domination of the right-wing national bourgeoisie which still has points of conflict with imperialism, but which has established its one-party systems by suppressing the parties of the working class and the left. In yet other cases, however, it represents a progressive coalition of forces under the leadership of the left-wing national bourgeoisie or the patriotic intelligentsia, and in which the working class is able to exercise a considerable influence.

These developments have naturally given rise to widespread discussion and have become the subject of some of the most important and most controversial arguments now taking place in Africa.

Why have these one-party systems arisen in Africa? Are they a help or a hindrance to Africa's progressive development? What are the theories put forward to explain their appearance on the political scene? How do their supporters justify these systems? Can such systems be politically stable?

The remarks which follow in the ensuing sections of this article are concerned mainly with the mass single parties which have emerged as an expression of the national liberation struggle, rather than with the single party systems which have been established by terror and which represent a narrow ruling section of the population, propped up by imperialist finance and foreign arms.

Parties Embracing the Whole National Movement

All political parties are related to social classes, sometimes representing a section of a class, sometimes a class as a whole, sometimes a coalition of class forces. Thus, in some countries, it is not uncommon to have Workers' parties, or Peasants' parties, or Smallholders' parties. Normally, however, while the working class is not afraid of showing its class face in the name of its party, the big employers and landowners prefer to conceal the class basis of their party. We know of no political party named the Big Employers' Party, or the Party of Monopolies, or the Feudal Landlords' party. Instead we have the British Conservative Party, the Italian Liberal Party and

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Christian Democrat Party, the American Republican and Democrat parties, and so on.

Whatever may be the *names* of political parties, they are all founded on the class realities of the society in which they arise. When one comes to examine the political parties in Africa, however, one is faced with a different problem than that of political organisations in the clearly divided class societies of industrialised Europe. This is particularly true of the new African states which have emerged in West, Central and Eastern Africa.[1]

In a whole number of independent African states today (and this applies, too, to a number of African territories which have not yet won their independence), the political scene is dominated by one mass party which embraces not just the most politically conscious sections of the people but the whole national movement. This is true, for example, of the Convention People's Party in Ghana, the People's Democratic Party in Guinea, the Union Soudanaise in Mali, and the Tanganyika African National Union in Tanganyika. In some countries, for example, Uganda, Northern Rhodesia, and Kenya, one party is overwhelmingly dominant, but imperialist manoeuvres and tribalism have given rise to minor parties which, for a time, will continue to exist, though they seem fated to decline as the fight for independence is carried forward and their role becomes fully exposed.

Julius Nyerere, the President of Tanganyika, argues in his interesting thesis on *The One Party System,* that the major political parties in most African states have a different origin to the class parties in Europe or America. These African parties, says Nyerere "were formed to challenge the foreigners who ruled over us. They were not, therefore, political 'parties'—i.e. factions—but nationalist movements. And from the outset they represented the interests and aspirations of the whole nation." Of course, the fact that these parties embrace millions of people, sometimes right down to the children in the villages, should not hide from us the fact that they represent class interests, too. They include workers and peasants, intellectuals, artisans and petty bourgeois sections, the national bourgeoisie and even some semi-feudal chiefs. Colonial oppression bears heavily on all these classes. They all suffer from the economic exploitation and political repression which is the essence of the colonial system. And, through the daily indignities they have suffered at the hands of their colonial oppressors, they have all become equally aware of the racial oppression which is part and parcel of colonialism.

As a recent article in *The African Communist* points out: "Although many of the mass parties in Africa are under bourgeois leadership, they are not typical 'capitalist' parties in the sense that we have come to know such parties in Europe and North America. The African mass parties, besides reflecting the interests of certain local capitalists, also express the interests of the workers, peasants and intellectuals, in the common struggle of all these classes against their common enemy—imperialism." ("The One Party State in Africa" by B. Pela: *The African Communist*: April-June, 1963: Vol. 2, No. 3).

Thus all the patriotic, anti-colonial classes in African society come together and unite around the common aim of overthrowing the rule of the colonial power. It is the common experience, the common suffering, which drives all these class forces to merge their strength in one mass organisation, in a single national party. And it is the common experience that the utmost unity of their forces is required to defeat colonialism which results in the building up of these mass parties and the deep hostility felt towards any person or group which seems to break away from or be in opposition to that anti-colonial unity, that united national front of the people against colonialism.

Class Structure of Africa

It has to be borne in mind that present-day Africa presents a class and social structure markedly different from that existing in the advanced capitalist countries. Elements of all pre-socialist forms of society are present in Africa.

Strong survivals of *primitive communism* are to be seen in the strong solidarity of members of the same social unit on the level of the patriarchal family, the clan, or the village, and in the absence of private ownership in the traditional systems of land tenure.

[1] Northern Africa—Egypt, Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia—though part of the single African continent with which it has much in common, contains societies which have important structural differences from those in the rest of Africa. In brief, this region experienced a more complete development of feudalism; the growth of indigenous capitalism too, was more marked. Thus class formation, generally speaking, has developed rather more in North Africa than in the rest of the continent. In consequence, the one-party systems in North Africa present a number of problems which are not present in many other African states. It is important to note that in all four of these North African states the working class formed their own independent class parties, Communist Parties; and that in all four cases these Parties hae been declared illegal by the Government of these independent states. The only other clearly established Marxist-Leninist parties in Africa are the P.A.I. (Party of African Independence) in Senegal and the Communist Party of South Africa (both of which are illegal), and the new Communist Party of Basutoland.

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Patriarchal slavery, in which the slave is the collective property of the patriarchal family not of the individual, still exists in many parts of Africa. (The fundamental cell of pre-colonial society in Africa was that of the patriarchal or extended family, a grouping of people related through either the male or the female line, which formed an economic unit and worked a particular piece of land under the direction of the patriarch, that is, the oldest man. This form of society developed directly out of primitive communism).

From the patriarchal society emerged *elementary forms of feudalism,* in which privileges or duties applied to the clan as a whole or to the extended family. Relations of subordination varied, from place to place, ranging from patronage to real serfdom. These forms did not arise everywhere, nor always to the same degree. There were numerous varieties and stages of transition. The impact of the European slave trade, and then of the modern colonial system, led to a certain modification of these forms of elementary feudalism, to the beginnings of the decomposition of the patriarchal community and sometimes to its complete disolution. Over most of Africa, however, elementary forms of feudalism still exist.

Side by side with the continuation of the patriarchal community as an economic reality within the traditional subsistence economy, there has arisen a class of individual farmers, some of them rich enough to employ and exploit African wage labour. Indigenous *African capitalism* is also found in trade and commerce, in transport, hotels, and small-scale production. The effect of sixty years of imperialist rule has been to draw African society into commodity production and the money economy of imperialism. This has led to the birth of modern classes—*capitalists, cash-crop farmers, urban petty-bourgeoisie, and workers,* the latter being employed by foreign monopoly firms or by governments (originally colonialist ones).

Of course, no single African state reveals a simplified structure as indicated above. There are gradations and variations; in some territories feudalism is more powerful and has passed beyond the stage of "elementary feudalism". In some cases, an African capitalist class scarcely exists. In others, it is beginning to grow fast, though still relatively weak. But everywhere, without exception and notwithstanding the differences, class formation is taking place. The old society is in a process of dying away and the new society is coming into being. Peasants are becoming workers, their brothers (or sisters) are becoming traders, their sons intellectuals; and from the ranks of the richer peasants, the new intelligentsia and the more powerful chiefs are arising a new bourgeosie. In this period of social change, with new, modern class forces being rapidly developed, there is great mobility between classes and not yet a fully stratified, class society as, for example, in Britain. Class consciousness, too, is not yet developed. Often tribal sentiment is a far stronger motive force.

Under such conditions, it is, perhaps, not surprising that mass national parties should arise at this stage in Africa rather than specific, clearly defined class parties.[2]

Against Tribalism

The need to defeat tribalism has been an additional factor influencing national leaders to strive to unite the whole people under the umbrella of the single mass party. Tribalism has frequently been denounced by African leaders and by the people's organisations, such as the All-African People's Conference, as a major danger to the cause of African independence and progress. Tribalism has played havoc in the Congo. It has brought deep divisions into the national liberation struggle in the Cameroons. It threatens to disrupt the liberation movement in Angola. It weakens unity in Nigeria. It is a fester in Northern Rhodesia. And it has been turned by British imperialism into a major menace in Kenya. For these reasons national leaders such as Nkrumah, Modibo Keita, and Sekou Touré have found it necessary to emphasise repeatedly the importance of upholding national unity and avoiding the dangers of tribalism; and they have backed their words with actions designed to weaken the power of chiefs from whom the danger of tribalism can stem.

Thus there are clearly historical reasons which explain the emergence of mass national parties in Africa, parties which command the support of the overwhelming majority of the people, which are backed by all the progressive forces in society, and which are an expression of the people's united fight against colonialism and for independence.

Theoretical Conceptions

But this is really only the beginning of the argument, for what has provoked the widespread

[2] The more than 40 years' existence of a Communist Party in South Africa is due to a number of special features, the main of which is that the Republic of South Africa is the most industrialised country in Africa. Consequently it has a considerable African working class (composed not only of casual migrant labour, but also of semi-skilled and even skilled workers). This working class has, to a considerable extent, become urbanised and stable as a proletariat and has, in consequence, largely broken with tribal backwardness.

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discussion in Africa is not simply that all the patriotic forces in society have combined in order to win independence, but that *after* the winning of independence and the establishment of new African states and governments, the overwhelming dominance of one party remains and it very rapidly becomes the only political party in the given country, often as a result of specific legislation formally outlawing other parties or laying down the one-party system as an essential part of the governmental and state structure.

The emergence of these systems and the discussion on them has led to the writing of articles and theses by African leaders in which the theoretical conceptions behind these African one-party systems are expounded. These conceptions, developed particularly in the writings of Julius Nyerere (Tanganyika), Kofi Baako (Ghana), Madeira Keita (Mali), and Ndabaningi Sithole (Southern Rhodesia), deserve to be better known outside Africa than they appear to be. These African leaders submit the traditional bourgeois parliamentary systems to close scrutiny, and with cogent and frequently ironical argument, deliver devastating blows at liberal and Westminster conceptions of party politics. Julius Nyerere, for example, rightly draws attention to the hypocrisy of the two-party system of "ins" and "outs" practised in the West, referring to it as "football politics", since the differences between the main parties are not, he stresses, really fundamental ones. If the differences were fundamental, he points out, then it would be time for a fundamental change, and " 'change' in that context is a euphemism, because any change in fundamentals is properly termed 'revolution'." But once the revolution has been accomplished, whether by armed insurrection or the ballot box, then what is the point, he argues, in returning to the two-party system. If it is only to return to arguments on non-essential matters, this "must inevitably involve the hypocrisy of 'football politics'—with the government of a nation as the 'Football Cup'."

The experience of the African people in their fight for independence, and their perceptive understanding of the sham character of the rivalries between the bourgeois parties in the Western parliamentary systems, has taught them that there is nothing sacred about the two-party system.

Moreover, they feel very strongly that the tasks facing the new States after their achievement of independence are so immense that nothing short of the total mobilisation of the united people is needed. And this involvement of the whole people in actively working to revolutionise their lives, they argue, is the real basis and content of democracy. In order to secure the united effort of the whole people—and to combat both tribalism and the divisive activities of neo-colonialism—the retention or introduction of the one-party system is thought to be the most suitable. Anything which seems to cut across the people's united striving for a better life is seen at best as a luxury, at worst as deliberate treachery. The experience of Ghana, for example, seems to show that in the harsh conditions of a new state fighting its way forward to end colonialism in all its forms, an official Opposition can very quickly become a dangerous breeding ground and gathering centre for all the reactionary, backward-looking, self-seeking elements in the society and can thus constitute a basis for neo-colonialist plots against the Government.

The people of Africa, therefore, have no special love for the "Westminster model" with its official Opposition. As Ndananingi Sithole has stressed:

> " . . . the Opposition may only be African in appearance but European in fact. The Opposition may have its remote controls in London, Washington, D.C. or Paris."
>
> (*The Voice of Africa*: September, 1961)

Some African leaders are careful to point out that there is no special virtue in a one-party system either. Sithole warns: "Neither it nor the two-party system can guarantee democracy to the peoples of Africa and to the peoples of the world. The two-party system may be European imperialism's gateway to African countries, and, equally so, the one-party system may be dictatorship's first eggs in Africa." It is, he stresses, *"not the form but the content that counts."* And the essential content, he stresses, which determines the character of the system is "the will of the majority."

Madeira Keita, in warning that "the system of a single party is not without its dangers ", emphasises in similar fashion to Sithole that "Democracy is the management of public interests in accordance with the will of the masses, the will of the greatest number."

Pre-Colonial Africa

The dangers of the one-party system in Africa are real, indeed, as the past three years have shown only too well. Before, however, we examine these dangers, it is necessary to look at one other element in the discussion on one-party systems now taking place in Africa, and that is the relation of the modern one-party systems to traditional African pre-colonial society.

In his work, *Facing Mount Kenya* (1938), Jomo Kenyatta writes:

> "The starting point was the family unit. From the governmental point of view members of one

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> family group were considered as forming a family council (*ndundu ya mocii*) with the father as the president. The father represented the family group in the government. The next group was the village council (*kiama gia itura*) composed of the heads of several families in the village. The senior elder acted as the president of the council and this group represented the villagers in the government. . . . "

And so the structure of primitive democracy was built up to the district council (*kiama kia rugongo*) in which all the elders participated. Over this council there was a presiding committee (*kiama kia ndundu*) composed of the senior elders of the villages. The senior elder who was most advanced in age and wisdom was elected as judge and president of this presiding district committee. From the district councils a national council was formed, which represented the whole population.

From Kenyatta's description of the pre-colonial life of the Kikuyu people it is clear that from the family unit or patriarchal family upwards, the people were represented in their governing bodies as a united people. There was a relatively simple structure; class society was in its early development; there were no political parties; a separate state apparatus had not yet emerged. Although within this form of society public matters were resolved by widespread discussion, it was, in essence, a patriarchal society in which the elders held a privileged position.

Kofi Baako, Ghana's Minister of Defence, writes:

> "In the society which existed before the impact of Western Civilisation the members of this society regarded themselves as a family led by one man and assisted by a council, the members of which represented not class, economic or social, but lineages; matters affecting the welfare of the community as a whole were openly discussed by the chief and his elders and decisions taken were always made known to the entire community. If any person or persons disagreed with the decisions they made known their views to their representative elders, who in turn discussed those matters at their daily meetings."
>
> (*The Spark*: March 15, 1963)

Here, too, from Ghana, in Western Africa, where the form of pre-colonial society was very different to that of the Kikuyu in eastern Africa, we see the patriarchal family as the unit. The important difference between ancient Ghana and the Kikuyu people lies in the existence of the system of chiefs. The Kikuyu people had no chiefs. The ancient kingdom of Ghana, however, which represented more highly developed feudal society, had evolved a chiefly system.

"No section of the community," writes Kofi Baako, "regarded itself as an opposition to the established rule of the chief and his elders. Thus any such group would be regarded as rebellious and therefore not worthy to exist in the community. . . . " As for the chief, he ruled "with popular consent" but was expected to accept the advice of the representatives of the clans or lineages. The chief, stresses Baako, was not autocratic; he could even be de-stooled in accordance with the traditional practice of the community.

Although British rule led to the Ghana chiefs being deprived of their real political and military power, and leaving them mainly ceremonial and social functions, yet says Baako, the people's traditional concept of government "did not undergo any profound change." That concept, he argues, "was one of the rule of the people's representatives with the people's consent."

Democracy in Pre-Colonial Africa

How democratic, in reality, was pre-colonial Africa? In its earliest period, that of primitive communism, before the emergence of classes, people stood generally in equal relationship to one another and there was no domination of sections of the people by others. Even at a later stage, when classes emerged, when patriarchal slavery and elementary feudalism evolved—and, as a result, a state and weapons of coercion appeared—even then coercion and class domination were not always harsh. Often, state functions for managing the collective interests, for defence against external enemies, for the organisation of public works and collective labour, the control and distribution of food reserves and so on, was carried out mainly through custom and recognition of common interests and by moral pressure. The latter was an important factor. Sometimes it was strong enough to compel a wrongdoer to leave the clan as an unwanted outcast.

In some African societies, as among the Kikuyu, for example, there were no chiefs. Even in those societies where chiefs existed, they did not always have permanent powers. Sometimes their prerogative was restricted to allocating the commonly held land and carrying out magic rites. Other chiefs—war chiefs—held rights which were similarly restricted in scope. It was customary, too, very often, for the rights of chiefs to be enjoyed for only a limited duration.

In other words, the traditional African society tended to be democratic rather than autocratic. Individual chiefs usually had limited forces to secure obedience to their orders. A chief could seldom decide anything. He had to consult his council, which was itself subject to the influence and pressure of the people through the

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medium of the meeting of village elders, or, in some societies, of the whole people.

At the meetings themselves, since class society was only partially developed, there was no question of a clash of opposing class forces. Contradictions were mainly non-antagonistic ones, as between men and women, or between young men and elders, not between antagonistic social classes.

The community discussed questions not to secure a victory for the "majority" over the "minority" but in order to reach a unanimous agreement. It was through a search for unanimity, for the highest common factor of agreement, and not through a clash between two "parties" that tribal democracy functioned.[3]

But how much of these early practices were still in existence in Africa at the time of the imperialist scramble for Africa at the end of the nineteenth century? Four hundred years of the European slave trade had retarded the evolution of African societies. Early forms of feudalism were the most common feature of Africa at the end of the nineteenth century. Class divisions and conflicts were not yet acute, though the elders or village headmen were becoming economically privileged.

A Dying Tradition

Imperialist rule carried this process a stage further. The disolution of traditional society was hastened by the introduction of twentieth-century colonialism. The previous forms of tribal democracy, already undergoing modifications, deteriorated still further. The outward forms of tribal customs were retained by the colonialists, but the inner democratic content was greatly weakened. And the chiefs, who in some territories had already assumed certain autocratic powers, were turned into paid civil servants of the colonial system.

It is clear, therefore, that to talk of basing modern African societies on the foundations of traditional democracy is to talk of a tradition which has long been dying. The fully democratic kernel of primitive Communism only existed in the earliest stages of African society. Julius Sago, writing in the Ghanaian journal, *The Spark* (April 19, 1963), where he sharply criticises idealist conceptions which have been fostered regarding the "traditional socialist" character of pre-colonial Africa, goes so far as to state:

> "The traditional collectivist way of African life is a mere illusion. . . . What is the old collectivist way of life in Africa? It wasn't a classless society. Nor were relations in it harmonious. It was a feudal system based on the hegemony of a few big families lording it over less privileged ones and even serfs. Human rights were non-existent."

It is not without interest to note here that Alan Winnington, in his book on *The Slaves of the Cool Mountains,* shows how in China *primitive* democracy was a serious barrier to the development of *modern* democracy. In a chapter significantly entitled "Battle Against Primitive Democracy" he describes the efforts in one village of the Wa—a primitive people practising slavery—to establish a co-operative. This they do with the aid of the Party political workers. But the first obstacle they have to overcome is that of the traditional unanimous vote obtained by the moral subordination of the villagers to the headman. By patient work and discussion, they encourage the villagers to take their own initiative and make their *own* decision. *The result is not unanimity but a clash of opinion, the emergence of a majority and a minority.* And the majority of villagers vote against the inclusion of the headman in the co-operative—for the headman owns eighteen slaves.

In other words, once social classes have emerged—no matter how embryonic—traditional forms of democracy begin to deteriorate and to become disguised forms of domination, by headmen or elders. The domination may commence as a moral factor, but in itself it assists the establishment of an economically privileged section which becomes the politically dominant class. In outward form, early democratic practices may continue, but in their actual content they increasingly represent the domination of a class.

And this, generally speaking, is what happened to traditional African democracy.

Class Struggle Inevitable

Therefore, important as may be the traditional methods of democracy—and it would certainly be useful to carry forward and make use of what-

[3] This, of course, was not a uniquely African tradition. Early societies everywhere followed these practices of forms of popular control over the chief, and democratic discussion to reach unanimity. Lewis Morgan noted these practices amongst the Iroquois gens. Engels points out, in his *Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State,* that the same principles were widespread amongst the early German mark communities. G. F. Schomann (*Antiquities of Greece*) shows that at the time of Homer it was the popular assembly of the people which decided all important matters. He stresses that: "Whenever a matter is discussed that requires the co-operation of the people for its execution, Homer gives us no indication of any means by which the people could be forced to it against their will." President Sukarno has pointed out that traditional Indonesian society, too, followed these principles of consultation and unanimity: "Rather than the idea of democratic majority and opposition, our society has evolved for itself the ideas of democratic consultation and unanimity. . . . "

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ever is positive in these earlier forms in Africa—the question of the one-party systems in Africa today must be examined mainly in relation to modern African society and the emergence of new classes. In examining these questions we need to see how the one-party systems have functioned in Africa, the role of the working class within them, and the future perspective for these parties.

These problems cannot be seriously examined apart from the class forces which exist today in Africa. As we have seen, mass national parties have come into existence in Africa because of certain specific historical reasons. It is the stage of African society, the simultaneous existence side by side of elements of all the known forms of human society, the relatively limited growth of modern class forces, the dangers of tribalism and of neo-colonialist disruption, which have welded the people together into a united army of national independence in the form of the single mass party.

Yet, however embryonic modern class society is in Africa—and it is more developed than some theoreticians are prepared to admit—classes are in a process of formation in Africa and conflicting class interests exist.

Madeira Keita admits that "we obviously cannot assert that Negro African society is a classless society", but he nevertheless claims that "the differentiation of classes in Africa does not imply a diversification of interests and still less an opposition of interests."

This is broadly true in so far as the struggle against colonialism is concerned, for all patriotic classes are concerned to end colonial rule. But once independence has been won and the battle is unfolded to reconstruct the economy, to carry through fundamental land reform, to uproot the imperialist monopolies, and to decide whether the the path of development should be capitalist or non-capitalist, divergence of class interests is bound to grow and sharper class conflict is inevitable. Such conflicts need not necessarily lead to a violent collision of opposing class forces, yet struggles there will be—against the forces of patriarchal slavery and feudalism, and between the growing working class and the new bourgeoisie.

The African working class, together with the mass of the peasantry, and with the support of patriotic democrats amongst other sections of the people, will strive to carry its country through to the completion of the tasks of national liberation and on towards socialism. To accomplish this task, the working class cannot confine itself to being a *subordinate* force in a single mass party whose ideology and leading personnel are predominantly those of other classes, especially that of the bourgeoisie. To open up the way to the construction of socialism requires a party led by socialists, by those who, on the basis of the scientific teachings of Marxism-Leninism, are capable of leading the whole people through the complex and difficult task of completing their national liberation, overcoming the plots of neo-colonialism, winning their country's economic independence, and, through the creation of independent national democracies, make it possible to avoid the path of capitalism and to take the shorter, more direct route to socialism.

Working Class Must Lead

The mass national parties in Africa, as we have seen, are coalitions of class forces. In none of them has the working class yet emerged as the undisputed leading force. The defence of working class interests, the maintenance of the most consistent fight against imperialism, the carrying through of fundamental land reform, the completion of national liberation and the passing over to the construction of socialism require that the working class assumes a leading position, *either within the single mass party or through the formation of a separate organisation.*

The national bourgeoisie will naturally strive to ensure its own class domination of the State, the economy, and of the political party. In those countries, as, for example, Egypt, or Tunisia, where the right-wing national bourgeoisie, sometimes in alliance with compradore sections, has emerged as the dominant force, the working class and its communist parties have been suppressed, and the one-party system has been clamped down *as a form of control over the working class and the general democratic movement.* In these circumstances, the one-party system, far from being a form of political organisation which helps to unite the whole people against imperialism and neo-colonialism, becomes an instrument for the suppression of the democratic majority of the people by a small upper crust, a capitalist minority. Such regimes, increasingly dependent on repression to maintain their power, deepen the divisions among the people, produce disharmony between the people and the Government, and thus weaken the very national unity whose name has been invoked in justification of establishing a one-party dictatorship. Under such conditions, the possibilities of imperialism strengthening its influence increase; and for that very reason it gives every encouragement to the anti-communism of such parties and governments.

Similarly, in a number of states in French-speaking Africa, one-party systems have come into being on the basis of suppressing the genuinely democratic organisations, both political

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and trade union, in the interests of a ruling group which still leans heavily on imperialism and which hopes to appropriate for itself the richest fruits of independence.

Thus, in those African states where the working class is excluded from all influence in the State, where imperialist puppets or reactionary local capitalists rule, the one-party system becomes a serious threat to the people and to their endeavours to complete their national liberation. But in other states, as for example, in Ghana, Guinea and Mali, where patriotic democrats play the leading role, where the working class exercises a considerable influence and is able to have more say on governmental policy and in defence of its own class interests, and where the national bourgeoisie is either weak or does not enjoy undivided dominion over the State and the economy, the one-party system may, under certain favourable conditions, make possible the further growth of working class influence and the extension of Marxist-Leninist ideas within the single mass party to the stage where these forces enjoy majority support and thus make possible a special form of development.

The more progressive African one-party systems are, in a way, an arena in which the working class and national bourgeoisie struggle for mastery. The two classes are united in the one party in their common aim of upholding national independence and defeating neo-colonialism. But within the one party they are in conflict concerning the future development of society. As long as it is possible for the working class to preserve its own class independence within the mass national party, to defend its own class interests, to champion its own working class views on all questions concerning the economic, social, political and ideological development of the nation, to study, discuss and propagate the ideas of Marxism-Leninism, then the working class will be able to support the maintenance of such a party whose progressive transformation into a party based on scientific socialism will become possible.

The Decisive Factor

If the working class, by its consistent work, its example of courage, self-sacrifice and clear-sighted policy, is able to become the decisive leading force within the single party, then the formation of a separate party of the working class will not be necessary. In such circumstances, it is the national bourgeoisie which will try to disrupt the mass party, to break it up, to escape the control of the working class and to pursue a different policy by seeking to establish its own separate party. And it will receive every encouragement in doing this from the imperialist powers and their intelligence departments.

If, on the other hand, the working class finds that within the single mass national party the developing capitalist class is assuming dictatorial control of the party, increasingly limiting the activities of the working class, turning more and more to attacking the working class and its democratic allies, and striving to turn the new nation on to the full capitalist path and to tie it to the heels of imperialism, then it is inevitable that the working class will seek to establish its own political party, legal or illegal, which can defend its own class interests and, at the same time in alliance with all other progressive forces, uphold the widest interests of the nation as a whole and save it from betrayal.

The question of a single party or of two or more parties is not one of abstract, absolute principle. *The decisive factor is what is to be the character of the single mass party? What will be its composition, its leadership, its policy, its ideology?* In the conditions of present-day Africa, and because of the favourable world situation in which the forces of socialism are increasingly determining the direction of the march of all mankind, it is possible that in a number of African states we will see the emergence of a new kind of mass revolutionary party, anti-imperialist in inspiration, embracing all the progressive forces of the nation, and progressively being won for the ideology of scientific socialism. Lenin, in his discussions with Mongolian leaders in 1921, envisaged a somewhat similar development in Mongolia; and this, in fact, took place.

It would obviously be wrong to be dogmatic as to how the one-party systems in Africa will evolve. The above comments are simply an attempt to indicate the conditions under which these single mass parties have come into existence and the problems which they now face. There are many aspects of this whole question which require further discussion and argument. It is hoped that this article will contribute to that end.

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Western Europe: A New Stage

Sam Russell

MAY DAY 1963 marked a moment in the traditional review of the forces of the international working-class movement which was of particular significance for the whole future of Western Europe.

In Britain, the General Secretary of the British Communist Party, John Gollan, stated at the Hyde Park rally: "We are at the beginning of a new stage in the political situation in Western Europe. The first period after 1945 was one of anti-fascist unity. It was broken in 1947 with the cold war . . . but now we see the resumption of the advance and growth of the Left, the crisis in the cold war and the Common Market."

In France, the General Secretary of the French Communist Party, Maurice Thorez, pointed out that this May Day was marked "by the advance of the unity of the working masses. From the proletarians in the factories to the professors of higher education, all workers are closing the ranks, despite differences of opinion and organisation. The united action of the workers of France is an integral part of the powerful workers' movement which is developing in all the capitalist countries of Western Europe."

And in Italy, where elections had been held in which the Communist Party polled 7,763,854 votes—over a million more than in the previous elections of 1958—the General Secretary of the Italian Communist Party, Palmiro Togliatti, declared that "a new political course is opening in Italy, a political course in which the initiative of our Party and of the left-wing democratic united forces may have a decisive role.

"Our Party," he continued,

> "has obtained a great victory going beyond our forecasts and expectations. The falsehoods and ridiculous statements on a supposed crisis of our Party, its decline, its detachment from the masses, fell to pieces. The Christian Democrat Party has been clearly defeated. The Communist Party emerges, on the basis of a precise political programme, as the biggest, the most militant and decisive democratic left force. Its success did not damage other left-wing forces which, in the general framework and total results, show a net increase."

Since those May Day declarations by the leaders of these three fraternal parties in Western Europe, life itself has shown how correct these estimations were. In France and Italy reaction is on the retreat following important Communist advances at the polls, militant trade union action in the factories and the growth of Communist-Socialist unity, despite the attempts of certain leaders to halt it.

In Italy, regional elections in Sicily held six weeks after the general elections registered a new Communist advance even in that short period, with a Communist vote of 557,202, which was 24.8 per cent of the total vote, compared with 23.7 per cent six weeks before.

Socialist-Communist Unity in France

In France, the Congress of the French Socialist Party at Whitsun marked an important step forward in the establishment of working-class unity, and to such an extent that *The Economist* declared: "Relations between Communists and Socialists—in the trade unions as well as at party level—are now the key element in French politics."

Five years ago, in May 1958, General de Gaulle was able to come to power in France as a result of working-class disunity and the backing of the fascist generals and reactionary settlers in Algeria. In 1958, to judge from all appearances, it seemed well-nigh impossible that the Communist and Socialist parties could ever agree on anything. Yet since the successes at the general election in November 1962, and, above all, since the miners' strike of March 1963, the tide for the unity of all the democratic and progressive forces in France has been flowing more strongly than at any time since the memorable days of the Popular Front nearly thirty years ago.

In 1958 General de Gaulle and the monopolies who backed him were able to stampede the French electorate into voting "Yes" in the first of his numerous referendums by playing on fear of civil war, and by counting on the confusion caused in considerable sections even of progressive Frenchmen and women by the war in Algeria. An important part in the creation of this confusion was played by the French Socialist Party and its leader Guy Mollet, who was among those who rushed to Colombey-les-deux-Eglises to beg General de Gaulle to take over. Only the

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French Communist Party stood firm in its opposition to the General. Only the French Communists consistently warned the French people of the dangers of Gaullism, fought for the end of the war in Algeria on the basis of recognition of the right of self-determination for the Algerian people, and insisted that true greatness for France could only come from a policy based on democracy.

It has taken five years for the correctness of that policy to be recognised by Guy Mollet himself at the Whitsun Congress of the French Socialist Party, by declaring that "I was mistaken about a man", though he seemed to reduce the disappearance of democracy in France under de Gaulle to the fact that the General had become old, and tried to defend himself by explaining his *affaire* with the General, and saying: "A cuckold is only contemptible when he consents."

In his two-hour speech to the Congress, M. Mollet examined the whole question of relations between the French Socialists and Communists, from *his* point of view, of course, and defended, against the right wing of his Party, the tacit agreement during the second ballot of the general elections in November 1962, under which many Communists were elected as a result of Socialists standing down and ensuring a single progressive candidate against the Gaullists, and which ensured the election of many more Socialists by Communists standing down (even in constituencies where the Communist candidate had topped the progressive poll in the first ballot).

M. Mollet himself retained his seat in the Pas-de-Calais only because of the Communist candidate's withdrawal, leaving him a straight fight on the second ballot. And the former Socialist Minister of the Interior, M. Jules Moch, who had lost his seat in 1958, gained a Gaullist seat in the Hérault after the withdrawal of the Communist candidate, who had a higher poll on the first ballot.

It has to be remembered that France's present electoral law is not true proportional representation and is rigged in such a way as to give the reactionary votes far more weight than the progressives. Thus in 1958 the Communist Party, which polled 20 per cent more votes than the Gaullist party, got ten seats, compared with 188 seats for the Gaullists.

In the elections of November 1962 the Socialists benefited much more than the Communists from the limited electoral agreement that had been reached, and although its votes dropped from 3,177,000 in 1958 to 2,320,000 and its percentage of votes from 15.5 to 12.6 it increased its number of seats from forty to sixty-seven. The Communist Party polled 3,992,000 votes, increased its percentage from 18.9 to 21.8 and its number of seats from ten to forty-one. But while the Communists with nearly 4 million votes got forty-one seats, the Gaullist U.N.R. Party with 5,847,000 votes got 220 seats.

But the issues at stake in France today demand much more than a mere electoral agreement. General de Gaulle's term of office expires in December 1965. He hopes then either to get himself re-elected on the basis of the amendment in the Constitution which provides for direct election of a President, under cover of which he plans a presidential regime dispensing with parliament altogether, or to achieve the establishment of a regime which would perpetuate reaction and place the progressive parties at a permanent disadvantage. Nor can Communists, Socialists and other progressives plan patiently for a campaign sometime in 1965, for it is not at all certain that the forces of reaction and the monopolies who back de Gaulle will quietly wait for the verdict of the polls. They did not wait for elections in 1958, and used the May 13 Generals' coup in Algeria to get their man in.

Socialist Party Congress

It is in the light of the urgency of the tasks facing the progressive forces in France that one has to examine the decisions of the Whitsun Congress of the French Socialist Party. Congress decided to try and unite in a single organisation all those "who support democratic Socialism", to work for the creation of a "left coalition" to replace the Gaullist regime by democratic government. Finally, it refused support from the right and declared that such a coalition must accept the support of the Communist Party, but did not envisage any joint discussion with the Communists on a common programme or on methods of application of such a programme. It also declared that "the necessary conditions for a political agreement with the Communist Party and for joint action resulting from such an agreement do not exist".

But the whole character of the discussion at the Congress showed that the Socialist delegates and the rank and file were ready for a much bigger advance towards working-class unity than these rather equivocal phrases would indicate. Speaker after speaker pointed out that without the Communists no democratic majority in France is possible, and demanded closer relations on the basis of the positive results already achieved at the November elections and the October referendum, in which de Gaulle only got 46 per cent of the votes and lost nearly 5 million votes compared with the 1958 referendum.

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The Socialist Congress showed the difficulties that still hold up the advance towards effective unity of action between Socialists and Communists, difficulties which, it must be said, do not come from the Communist side. But it also showed quite clearly the positive perspectives that exist for achieving such unity, clearly indispensable if de Gaulle and his regime are to be replaced by a renovated democracy. Even on the basis of the programme adopted by the Congress, possibilities of agreement are already apparent. In this programme there were many points which coincided with the programme put forward by the Communist Party, for example on extension of nationalisation, defence and extension of working-class rights and Republican liberties, democratic reforms in education, the vote for all at eighteen and better pensions for the old people.

Even on questions of foreign policy, where profound differences still exist, the Communist Party has already shown that it is possible to establish a basis for common action in support of peace. The French Communists have stated quite clearly that even on the basis of existing alliances France could contribute to the easing of international tension if it came out clearly in support of an end to the arms race, for general disarmament under control, for the renunciation of the atomic striking force, so beloved of General de Gaulle, and the prohibition of all nuclear weapons.

Above all there is agreement that not only de Gaulle must go, but with him the régime which has strangled democracy in France for the past five years.

The Miners' Strike

The magnificent miners' strike which lasted for thirty-five days last March showed the great advances made in working-class unity in the trade union field and in the economic fight for increased wages to meet the ever-rising cost of living. It was a fight, too, against de Gaulle's privately expressed plans to "smash the unions". From the beginning the three main trade union organisations into which France's trade union movement is still unfortunately divided worked harmoniously together for almost the first time in the mining industry since the split began in 1947. Nor was it only in the coalfields that this unity was apparent. All over France a massive solidarity movement began, supporting the miners morally and financially and helping them to defy de Gaulle.

The strike began on March 1, and on March 2 de Gaulle signed a decree at his home in Colombey-les-deux-Eglises mobilising the miners, thus laying them open to prosecution under military law if they continued the strike. This act, which was supposed to bring the miners to their knees, had the opposite effect and gave the strike a political significance from the outset. De Gaulle's signature of the decree showed that he took personal responsibility for the Government fight against the miners.

Many in France expected the strike to collapse because the decree meant the threat of armed force against the miners. But, far from collapsing, the strike move was strengthened, and the miners stayed out until they had obtained a large part of their demands. By their unity they had shown that de Gaulle's dictatorship was a colossus with feet of clay, once the divisions in the working-class movement had been ended.

Problems of Unity

The success of the miners inspired other sections of workers to fight the monopolies, which had been brought by de Gaulle still more openly into the commanding positions in the Government with the appointment as Prime Minister of M. Pompidou, who previously had been Director-General of the Banque Rothschild. Last December the workers of the nationalised Renault motor works obtained their demand for an extra week's holiday with pay, bringing their holiday to four weeks. The Government at once declared that this could not be extended to other workers. Yet the movement gathered momentum, the Government was powerless, and, as a result, this summer some 10 million French workers have enjoyed a full four weeks' holiday with pay, while a return to the forty-hour week first won by the Popular Front nearly thirty years ago is now on the cards.

It would, nevertheless, be wrong to underestimate those forces that fear this growing trend towards unity in France and are preparing to resist it. Playing on the fact that there are some in the Socialist Party leadership who are opposed to unity with the Communists, a number of reactionary elements who helped de Gaulle to power but who today oppose his personal power are trying to "knock together" an anti-Gaullist alliance, *excluding the Communists.*

To this end there has been formed an outfit called the *Centre d'Etudes et de Liaison des Démocrates,* whose main supporters are de Gaulle's former Finance Minister, M. Baumgartner, and the former Director-General of the French railways, M. Armand. Already a number of Radical and M.R.P. Deputies have joined, with the aim of replacing de Gaulle while leaving the political structure of his régime intact and continuing his policy. This, of course, does not cor-

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respond with the thoughts and hopes of the mass of workers and democrats who wish to free France not only from the figurehead of the system of personal power, but from the whole system, lock, stock and barrel.

There is a growing realisation that it would be dangerous in the extreme to wait for de Gaulle's departure in the hope that he will turn out to be some latter day Cincinnatus and return to the plough, and that unity and mass united action alone can ensure the disappearance of de Gaulle and his system from the French scene.

It is clear that what took place at the Socialist Party Congress is only the beginning. A leading Socialist, M. Claude Fuzier, has declared:

> "The Socialists will not agree to help, in any manner whatever, political operations which have as their objective the maintenance of the existing state of affairs after de Gaulle's departure, on the pretext that it is the only solution to avoid something worse."

After the Italian Elections

Such an appreciation applies aptly to the situation in Italy following the magnificent advance of the Communist Party in the last elections. Here, too, the question of Communist-Socialist unity is the key to further advance for the progressive movement as a whole against reaction and the power of the monopolies.

The situation following the Communist victory was summed up in the statement by Palmiro Togliatti after he had met President Segni:

> "The present political situation is serious. In fact the present leading group of the Christian Democrats are trying to ignore the election results. The country has gone to the left. But the entire effort of the Christian Democrat leaders is instead aimed at advocating and trying to find a government solution more right wing than that of 1962. The left-centre is only mentioned as an instrument to crucify, on the cross of anti-Communism, the Socialist Party and to fight against us.
>
> "All questions concerning a programme are left aside, clearly leaving it to be understood that the old standstill of the centre governments is to be resumed. If the solution of the crisis should be attempted in this direction, it is clear that the discontent and indignation in the country would be great. A deep political crisis would open up with unforeseeable developments.
>
> "We believe and hope that this path will not be followed. And in order to facilitate the task of finding and following a different road, we demand that the accent be put on certain aims: a policy of peace, regional autonomy, agrarian reform, economic planning, reform in the field of social security, etc. It is necessary for everybody to state clearly what they wish to do with regard to these essential points.
>
> "The forces of our Party are ready to support in the most suitable way whoever offers our country an explicit programme of democratic progress in freedom, for the application of those economic and political reforms upon which the destiny of all Italian workers depends. If, instead, a policy is persisted in of discrimination against our Party, so much the worse for those who intend following this path. We shall be in a position to give them, when the time comes and according to every rule of democracy, the lesson they deserve."

The first attempt by the General Secretary of the Christian Democrat Party, Signor Moro, to reconstitute, with the support of the General Secretary of the Italian Socialist Party, Signor Nenni, the discredited "opening to the left" government on which the last Christian Democrat administration was based, received a well-merited rebuff. And, in the leadership of the Italian Socialist Party, Signor Nenni was defeated on this issue. For what the people of Italy want, following the elections, is not a theoretical "opening to the left" which in any case remained largely on paper, but *a decisive turn to the left*. And the fact is that no such turn to the left can take place in Italy today without the Communist Party.

The "Centre-Left" Experience

In the five years since the last elections, the Italian conservative forces, headed by the monopoly groups and the Christian Democrat Party, tried every trick to prevent any progressive advance in dealing with the country's problems. In July, 1960, the Christian Democrats even attempted to impose a clerical-fascist government but this was prevented by popular opposition and mass pressure in the factories and fields. It was then that the so-called centre-left government was set up on the basis of the co-operation of the Christian Democrat, Social Democrat, Republican and Socialist parties.

Although popular pressure compelled this government to include in its programme certain pledges with regard to the most pressing problems of the country, the programme itself was based on deep ambiguities and contradictions. The Communists acknowledged the positive aspects of that programme, particularly since these were in the main the result of the relentless and long struggle they had waged. At the same time, however, the Communist Party made clear that the Christian Democrats had no intention of surrendering their control of the commanding heights of the country's economy. It stressed, too, that only the political unity of the working-class

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movement could defeat the manoeuvres of Italy's monopolies and secure the fulfilment of even the limited programme put forward by the Christian Democrats.

Facts have proved how correct the Communist estimation was. The vacillation and weakness of the Nenni Socialist Party leadership enabled the Christian Democrats, first, to shelve and later to abandon a great part of their programme. Planning for example was in the forefront of the centre-left programme and to this end steps should have been taken to set up regional governments, carry through a measure of agrarian reform, institute a democratic reform of the educational system and nationalise the electric power industry.

Of all this, only the nationalisation of electric power was carried through, thanks to a vigorous struggle in Parliament and in the country. But even this measure, divorced as it was from a new and democratic economic policy, did not give the country all the advantages of nationalisation, whilst the former monopoly owners were given excessive compensation. As for the rest, there was little change from the policy of previous so-called centre governments, and Italy's foreign policy remained subordinated to the rearmament and cold war policy of Nato. The Italian Government only shut down certain U.S. missile bases when the United States considered such bases unsuitable anyway from a technical point of view.

The people of Italy were able to see that Socialist support for the so-called "opening to the left" was merely a manoeuvre to maintain Christian Democrat domination, split the working-class movement and the democratic forces, and change the class nature of the Socialist Party to harness it to the government system desired by the Christian Democrats and the Italian bourgeoisie. That was why there was a growing demand inside the Socialist Party for an end to this policy which compromised the Party and prevented any real advance towards a real democratic let alone Socialist policy.

Italian Elections

It was in this situation that the election campaign began. The Italian Communist Party put forward a programme for a true turn to the left based on the defeat of the Christian Democrats. In foreign policy it called for peace, coexistence and disarmament. It called for the democratisation of the state machine and for democratic economic planning based on a policy of full employment, a radical transformation of agriculture through general agrarian reform, the revival of the South, the extension of the powers of local government, reform of the educational system, a state system of social security, nationalisation of the pharmaceutical industry and of the sugar monopolies.

On the question of relations with the Socialist Party, the Communist electoral programme declared:

> "The Communists do not want, as the reactionary forces hoped, an electoral fight between the Communist Party and the Socialist Party and the other democratic forces. The Communist attitude towards the Socialist Party and other democratic forces is to stress the need for a coherent united electoral campaign of the entire left against Christian Democracy, to defeat it and with it the Liberal, Monarchist and Fascist right. The weakening of the political unity of the working class, concessions to anti-Communist positions have weakened the Socialist Party *vis-à-vis* the Christian Democrats and led it to provide a left-wing cover for the manoeuvres of the ruling party. It is necessary for this cover to be torn off and for the left-wing forces to expose the responsibility of the Christian Democrats to the electors."

The Italian people gave their verdict on this programme by increasing the Communist vote from 6,704,454 votes in 1958 to 7,763,854, increasing the Communist percentage of the poll from 22.7 to 25.3, the number of seats in the Chamber of Deputies from 140 to 166 and in the Senate from 59 to 85. The Socialists increased their vote slightly to 4,252,000 although their percentage of the poll dropped from 14.2 to 13.8. The Christian Democrats lost about 800,000 votes and their share of the poll dropped from 42.4 to 38.3 per cent. For the first time, the combined Socialist-Communist vote was higher than the Christian Democrats and, if the Social Democrat Party of Signor Saragat and the Republicans are included, the left-wing parties obtained 46.6 per cent of the total votes cast.

The Communist Party topped the poll in Turin and Genoa and nearly beat the Christian Democrats even in Milan, capital of the much-vaunted "Italian economic miracle", but there was a notable swing to the Communist Party in the south along with considerable support in the north from those sections that had recently come from the south.

The elections showed a general movement to the left. It is true that the Socialist Party only managed to maintain its 1958 position and this was the first time that the Socialist Party had not gained at the same time as the Communists from a left movement in elections.

The reasons for this are clear. The Socialist Party did not know how or did not want to express with the Communists the deep discontent and dissatisfaction of the workers and the people

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in general with their present economic situation, nor did it attack the Christian Democrat policy. The Socialist Party propagandists did not even come out in defence of those policies which their Party had always considered essential such as neutralism in foreign policy, regional autonomy and nationalisation. And, while they did everything possible to underline their differences with the Communists, they did virtually nothing to show their differences, if differences they had, with the Christian Democrats or Social Democrats.

If the Socialist Party did not benefit from the general shift to the left in the country as a whole, this can only be explained by its policy of sacrificing working-class unity on the altar of Christian Democrat manoeuvres. This is why, while the Communists polled 25.3 per cent of the votes in Italy as a whole, in the working-class strongholds of Tuscany and Umbria their vote rose to nearly 40 per cent, whilst in Emilia Romagna it topped 40 per cent.

Lessons of the Elections

In their confusion in face of the indisputable evidence of solid Communist advance, the Christian Democrats and bourgeois propagandists everywhere have tried desperately to find an explanation—any explanation except the obvious one.

Some have tried to dismiss the Communist advance as just a "protest" vote. Protest there certainly was against the failure of the so-called centre-left government to do anything to defend the interests of the industrial workers in the north, of the landless peasants suffering in near starvation conditions in the south, the failure to free Italy from the grip of the monopolies at home and of U.S. domination of its foreign policy, failure to provide a minimum of social security or an education commensurate with the requirements of the 20th century. But the increased Communist vote was also a vote of approval, not only of Communist exposures of Christian Democrat failures, but approval for the positive, concrete and detailed policy for democracy and social advance put forward by the Italian Communist Party.

The results of the elections have made it impossible to return to the centre policy so long pursued by the Christian Democrats and, still less, to a right-wing policy as desired by so many of them. But it would be equally difficult to try and go back to the centre-left formula as practised by the Christian Democrats during the past year with Socialist Party support. For it is no longer possible to ignore the demands of some eight million electors who declared their unequivocal support for the programme put forward by the Communist Party. The elections showed that the only solution for Italy is a left-wing government free of the limitations and equivocations of the centre-left.

In Italy as in France the recent developments have shown that there can be no real left-wing advance, or even democratic advance without the Communists and any plans, formulas, manoeuvres or political combinations based on anti-Communism are doomed to failure.

The Italian Communist Party has made it quite clear that it is ready to discuss with Signor Nenni and the Italian Socialist Party the problems of democratic and social progress, of peace and the indispensable unity of the working class in the struggle for these objectives. In his report to the May meeting of the Central Committee of the Italian Communist Party, Pietro Ingrao declared:

> "What we want is a consolidation and not a weakening of the Italian working-class movement; in this spirit we shall move also in our immediate action for a new programme, a new government, a turn to the left.
>
> "We are not only willing but deeply interested in the discussion concerning the perspectives of working-class unity mentioned by Nenni. For some time we have waited for the autonomist Socialist comrades to face the perspective of democratic advance towards Socialism which we outlined in detail at our 10th Congress. So far this has not happened. . . . We are ready also for an examination in common of the experiences we have gained and of the problems to be faced where a proletarian revolution has been victorious."

The Marxist-Leninist policy pursued by the French and Italian Communist Parties have opened up new and glorious perspectives for working class and general democratic advance in both countries and the eventual transformation of these countries in the interests of the workers by hand and brain, despite the intrigues and manoeuvres of the monopolies.

Those who hoped that because of certain differences in the international Communist and Workers movement, the growing support of the masses of the people in France and Italy for the aims and ideals of Communism would be halted, have received a rude shock. Overcoming all difficulties, Communists and Socialists in both countries are finding new ways of working together, bringing nearer the day when working-class unity is a reality.

The example of the work of our great brother parties in Italy and France cannot but be an inspiration to Communists and Socialists in Britain and the world over, to working people everywhere in their fight for peace, democracy and Socialism.

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Can £479 Million be Wrong?

The Advertising Industry Today

Judith Todd

"THE Saboteurs" was the title of a whole session of the Advertising Association's 1963 Conference, and was devoted to lashing the critics of advertising in the high-pitched notes of suppressed hysteria. Much of the political criticism, declared the chairman, came from "a vociferous minority of chronic paranoiac depressives", but equally slated were journalists who forgot that they wrote "on the back of advertisements", while the industry itself was accused of failing to project the true and proper image of a noble calling. Meanwhile *Aims of Industry* (promoters of, among others, the "Mr. Cube", commercial television and reduction-of-surtax campaigns) is raising a Fighting Fund to combat the danger of any extension of nationalisation and political controls which might even threaten advertising itself.

Superficially advertising continues to flourish and increase. The total annual expenditure on all forms was, according to the Advertising Association's figures, £453.6 million in 1960, £470 million in 1961, and £479 million in 1962, in all years just over 2 per cent of the national income.

The stop-go system of British capitalism has until recently left advertising unaffected. The manic-depressive states alternately induced by various Chancellors of the Exchequer have indeed been reflected in the varying fortunes of the market for consumer-durables, as the statutory deposit requirements moved up or down, but the total expenditure on advertising has continued to rise. At the same time, the other sides of merchandising—point of sale displays, premium offers, competitions, plastic daffodils—have been intensively cultivated, particularly the art of packaging, which is fast approaching the packager's ideal: the polythene-wrapped self-sealing completely unopenable package.

Yet the advertising industry is not happy. "Overheads are rising. Profit margins are falling. Clients are cutting back. Agencies are going out of business", writes an executive of Erwin Wasey Ruthrauff & Ryan in the *Advertiser's Weekly* of 8th February, 1963, and another comment in the same issue points to the news of cuts in advertisers' appropriations which has been coming in since September 1962, and the struggle to hold agency profits at 2 per cent of turnover—a figure which next year may well go to 1·7 per cent. Owing to the peculiar structure of the industry, the agency makes its income from commission paid by the media owners on advertising placed by it, and is itself liable to the media owners (newspaper proprietors, TV programme companies, owners of hoardings, etc.) for the cost of the space booked, and bad debts from defaulting advertisers present a further problem in a period of recession. In January 1963, says the same writer, there was a record figure of four bankruptcies among agencies in one month.

Improving the Image

Declining trade is not the industry's only worry. For a couple of years now, there have been expressions of unease, discomfort, anger, and subliminal or outspoken feelings of guilt about the industry's own image in the eyes of the public. These can be traced to the criticism of advertising techniques and content aroused by the full development of commercial TV, during the "natural breaks" of which the inanities, vulgarities, illogicalities and sexual suggestivities of advertising forced themselves on millions of viewers who might have overlooked them in turning the pages of a newspaper or periodical. This criticism reached a peak in the 1962 report of the Pilkington Committee which, though not challenging the basis of a system which could allow commercial TV to flourish, made a frontal attack on the methods and manners of commercial TV and its advertising-orientated outlook.

Attempts to change the unfavourable image of advertising created by the cumulative effect of this criticism have taken several forms. First there have been the organisational steps taken by the industry. These include the setting up of an Advertising Standards Authority. Note the choice of "Authority" as a title for this body, containing overtones of a public body like the Port of London Authority or a Local Education Authority. "This smacks of the worst kind of misleading advertising because they are nothing but a private body", commented the Director of the Consumers' Association. The Chairman and five members of the Council of Ten are not to be connected with advertising, but a somewhat passive role is envisaged for its activities, as it does not contemplate testing advertised goods. A British Code of Advertising Practice was also launched in 1962, requiring that all advertising should be

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"legal, clean, honest and truthful. . . Advertisements should be presented in such a way that they do not weaken the acceptance of advertising as an essential service to industry and the public economy." The Advertising Standards Authority is to enforce the aforesaid legality, cleanliness, honesty and truthfulness.

How to Slim Away Unwanted Pounds

The higher functions of advertising as an "essential service" have been defended in a number of quasi-academic studies. As in so much writing of and about advertising, the authors seem to find it difficult to avoid the emotive phrases associated with advertisement copy-writing, and dwell on the social value of advertising in a "dynamic competitive economy", and its essential function in a "society where production is consumer-controlled." Since, however, so much criticism has been directed to the large and increasing annual sums spent in advertising (the Advertising Association's estimate runs from £308 million in 1956 to £479 million in 1962), it is now pleaded that the industry's own figure is misleading, and so, though legal and clean, perhaps not perfectly truthful and honest. Mr. John Treasure, Director in charge of Research and Marketing in "a leading London advertising agency", gives the following explanation in the *District Bank Review* of December 1962. Firstly, the £470 million expenditure of 1961 includes £102½ million on catalogues, window and interior display, exhibitions and free sample and gift schemes; secondly it includes advertising in trade and technical papers (£30½ million), classified advertising (£25 million) and administrative and miscellaneous costs of £34½ million, so that since "to most people the word means quite simply advertisements as seen on television or in the press", 60 per cent of their criticism can be soothed away, and instant relief obtained by silky-smooth, statistical action, leaving them only some £280 million to worry about. Even this figure can be pared down, because about £100 million was a subsidy to press and TV in the form of their net advertising income after deducting costs. Now we have only £180 million, and some of this could be described as "informative" rather than "persuasive", and in any case probably produces economic returns in terms of levels of employment and prices and the rate of economic growth. So really there is very little left to worry about.

Counsel for the Defence

The indefatigable Messrs. Ralph Harris and Arthur Seldon have produced two further sequels to their *Advertising in a Free Society* (1958). (Mr. Mervyn Jones in the *New Statesman* unkindly fails to understand what has led them to write *three* books in defence of advertising, "all using the same material".) *Advertising in Action* (Andre Deutsch, 15s.) contains 70 case-histories on advertised products and services. It is unsatisfactory because the cases are of uneven quality as histories, and contain very few references to unsuccessful campaigns (while in at least one case hailing as a success a line which has since been withdrawn because the heavy advertising and promotion charges priced it out of the market). But it gives many fascinating details of the advertiser's (or his agency's) approach to his public, like "the open and cordial appeal to social emulation" of Harvey's sherries, and the public's response: "Eagle Star's experience is that the replies to its (infrequent) keyed advertising have usually been few and disappointing, and some have been frivolous." The cloak-and-dagger side of commerce is typified in the anonymous tale of "A Packaged Food" A which anticipated competition from a rival B, and prepared plans to hot up its sales and advertising campaign through a code word as soon as B was ready to move. By a stroke of luck a B product pack, display material and salesman's portfolio outlining the marketing plan was discovered by an A salesman, the A plan swung into action, and B, though a bigger firm and fighting back with £120,000 a year allocations, lost the increased share of the total market to A.

Much more of the nature and economic and social significance of advertising can be gained by the reader for himself from the case histories than from the elaborate rationalisations and defences of the same authors' *Advertising and the Public* (Andre Deutsch 30s.). While pleading for a more scientific evaluation of the results of merchandising policy, including advertising, admitting many of its abuses, such as the exploitation of sex and youth by tobacco advertisers, and suggesting a number of minor reforms, the authors get very tangled up about the exact role of advertising in competition. At one point "competition is the best assurance against wasteful advertising", at another "advertising has been used with the intention of stopping or discouraging new competitors". Ultimately the book is about the free society which Messrs. Harris and Seldon seem to equate with Western capitalism, and which critics of advertising are threatening. They cherish a quotation from Mr. Enoch Powell: "Mark well those who suspect advertising, or would curb or limit it: they are those who have no faith in economic freedom and would end it."

Today and Yesterday

Among those who must be counted as "suspecters" of advertising is Mr. Lionel Birch, author of *The Advertising We Deserve?* (Vista Books 21s.) This is a chatty and sometimes facetious discussion for the layman of current aspects of consumer advertising: how the industry is organised, its relations

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with the mass media in which it appears, points in favour of and those against advertising in its contemporary usage. Mr. Birch "suspects" advertising in the sense that he does not uncritically accept either its claims or its methods, but his chief advantage is that he writes throughout as an individual "consumer" to whom advertising in the mass media is ultimately directed, and quotes a large number of actual advertisements and his own reactions to them. He thus provides a useful compendium of specimens to remind the reader, whether a "suspecter" or an acceptor, of the value-content, ranging from the physically serious problems of smoking and alcohol promotion, to the debasement of language and emotion in slogans about "country-fresh packs" of margarine and the introduction of love: products you will love, or which, better still, will win love for you. Mr. Birch answers the question mark in his title by suggesting reforms based on the "truth in advertising" theme—greater selectivity by advertisers, agencies and media owners, and a National Consumers Council for objective testing of goods—all of which "could be done without any form of obnoxious State interference, regulation or control."

State interference, regulation and control crop up regularly in *A History of English Advertising*, by Blanche B. Elliott (Business Publications & Batsford 35s.). Miss Elliott dates the beginning of advertising, apart from the "publicity" of shop and inn signs and trade guild banners, to the Patents created by the Stuart kings for public registry offices where wants and the means to fulfil (or possibly create) them could be announced, on *Exchange and Mart* lines. The extension of advertising to newsheets and pamphlets was complicated by the press licensing laws of Stuart, Commonwealth and Restoration times, and the Stamp Acts. In spite of these drawbacks, the "art of puffery" developed many of the characteristics of today's advertising. In 1730 the *Evening Post* carried an announcement which, suitably modulated by later food-and-drugs legislation, might have appeared in a 1963 woman's magazine.

> "*A Prolifick Elixir*—the cure of barrenness in women, of imbecility in men, by promoting the cheerful curricle of the blood and juices, raising all the fluids from their languid state to one more florid and sparkling, increasing the animal spirits, restoring the juvenile bloom, and evidently replenishing the crispy fibres of the whole habit with a generous warmth and balmy moisture . . . and even seems to keep back the effects of old age itself."
>
> (*A History of English Advertising*, p. 107)

Miss Elliott brings her story up to date with a rapid skip through twentieth century advertising in Britain, but must clearly not be numbered among the "suspecters".

> "An unceasing flow of more insidious forms of propaganda are affecting a society exposed to its power; a power that aims to destroy its moral codes and spiritual values as much as to disrupt its vital industries . . .; a power that seeks to conquer from *within* by undermining a structure built up by free thought and action in order to impose a slavery greater than mankind has ever known. . . . It is plain to see how its evil but specious doctrine affects the strike-happy trade-unionist, certain members of the House of Commons and reaches even to the precincts of the Church itself."
>
> (*Ibid.* pp. 214-215)

"Intellectuals and Pharisees"

Miss Elliott has put bluntly the fear which is at the back of the minds of most defenders of advertising; consumer protection is all very well and we are moderately in favour of it when it applies to the other man's product, but it does lead, perhaps innocently, to a very dangerous attitude of disloyalty and questioning of our way of life. While few defenders would put matters as bluntly as Miss Elliott, others adopt the policy of smearing advertising's critics as *intellectuals*—for it is well known that to be an intellectual is three-quarters of the way to becoming a communist. As Mr. Roy Thomson phrases it: "Why should people be denied the things they want and like because a small group of half-baked intellectuals think it would be better for them to have something else?" (*Advertiser's Weekly*—22nd February, 1963). (Intellectuals in this context are always half-baked, perhaps because they are too anti-advertising to use that well-advertised cake-mix). A swinging attack on these "enemies of advertising" was made by Mr. Brian Copland, Research Director of another well-known agency and, strangely enough, a member of the Labour Party's "Reith Commission" on advertising, in the *Spectator* (25th January, 1963): "They cannot be rationally argued with," he says. "A responsible and respected critic brings affection as well as knowledge to his subject" (note the obsession with love once more) but "a substantial part of the attack seems to stem from a wide and deep dislike of the way in which our Society works or even from the critic's own inability to integrate himself with it."

He is a non-integrator because he takes pride in his difference and superiority—in fact he is also a pharisee, who cannot come to terms with mass communications because they threaten his role of persuading and influencing others, and he is so prejudiced by his dislike of one of their manifestations, advertising, that he cannot see that the real point is who should control them. Mr. Copland, having put his finger correctly on the real point at issue, then proceeds to forbid discussion of it, because with "a marked distaste of the profit motive, it becomes virtually impossible to discuss the problem". He therefore goes on to a one-sided

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discussion in which the critic of advertising is accused of having a superior contempt for the viewing audience and being a self-appointed guardian of our cultural heritage, outraged "when our working class youth embraces American popular music, speech and fashion". In fact, he is just not *with it*, since advertising "merely mirrors the behaviour and attitudes held by most of the community".

Taxes and Growth

Though in face of external criticism advertising has therefore been variously explained away by its defenders as vital to our way of life, a less important factor in our way of life than we thought, and only a reflection of our way of life anyway, a number of internal problems have recently agitated the industry. Even before the appearance of the Pilkington Report, with its demand for closer control over the content of TV advertising, a nibble at the huge profits of the TV programme companies had been made in 1961, when the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Selwyn Lloyd (whose minority report to the Beveridge Report of 1954 causes him to be proudly claimed by the Tories as the father of commercial TV) put an excise duty of 10 per cent (later 11 per cent) on TV advertising. This was promptly passed on by the programme companies to the advertisers, but most advertisers seem to have decided not to increase the total cash available for expenditure on advertising, and reduced their number of bookings in order to pay for the tax. As the agency gets its 15 per cent commission on the advertising part of the bill only, its effective rate has been reduced to about 13½ per cent. A further attack on TV advertising profits is contemplated by the 1963 Television Bill, which at the moment of writing proposes a sliding scale of tax on the programme companies' receipts from advertisements. The menace of special TV taxation has also been accompanied by a slowing-up of the rate of growth in this important medium of advertising expenditure. This is shown in the *Advertisers' Weekly* relative figures for press, display and TV advertising in 1961 and 1962.

	1961		1962	
	£ *million*	*Change* %	£ *million*	*Change* %
Press (Display) ..	134.0	—0.24	139.0	+ 4
TV (including tax)	93.3	+21.5	99.8	+ 7

The surprising recovery of press advertising was largely due to the increased expenditure of tobacco manufacturers, while wines and spirits, washing machines and chocolate also increased. The bigger allocations went to the London morning and national Sunday press, and the technical and trade journals, so that the subsidisation of the press by advertisers is unevenly distributed.

The slowing-down of the TV advertising rate of growth is even more serious from the programme companies' and agencies' point of view when one considers that 1960 had shown a 31.8 per cent increase over 1959, and that the 1961 figure included 7 months of the new tax. TV advertising reached its peak by increasing annually as potential ITV viewers increased, but since practically the whole country is now covered, and since hopes of a second commercial channel were dashed, this rate can obviously not be maintained.

Threats and Promises

The boom of consumer-advertising is also changing in another aspect less favourable to the agencies. More emphasis is being placed on publicity at the point of sale, i.e. on displays and gimmicks intended to catch the customer's eye and open his (or usually her) purse while in the act of shopping, instead of reliance on "recall" from previously seen press or TV advertisements. This threat to the agency has two aspects. Firstly, the growth of retail chains has confronted the manufacturer with greater bargaining power on the part of retailers, who press him, as a condition of displaying his goods rather than a rival's, for higher discounts and elaborate display material, and the more money he spends in this kind of promotion, the less he has available for advertising. Secondly, the formation of larger retail units has given rise to the "own-brand" system, principally in food and clothing.

"Own-brands" bear the retailer's name but are frequently manufactured by a national manufacturer formally unconnected with the retailer (cf. Marks & Spencer, Boots, Tesco, London Grocers) and are sold at a lower price than the nationally-advertised products. There is some difference of opinion among retailers about how wide the range of own-brands should be, but as they build up a brand-loyalty of their own, they must affect the lines which are nationally advertised. It is possible that the latter might fight back with an increased advertising campaign, but until this occurs own-brands are a further threat to the commission side of an agency's business.

Yet all is not lost from the agencies' point of view. New clients may come forward: Government departments and nationalised industries are one of the biggest client-groups, reputed to spend some £10 million a year on publicity, with the three Services spending nearly £1,600,000 on recruiting. The Army employed a well-known agency for a campaign on TV and in the popular press; and a firm of sales-consultants to train over 5,000 officers and men as recruiting-salesmen. To this the War Office attributed the 1962 net increase of 13,500 in strength, in spite of the loss of a number of disappointed applicants who turned up in response to a

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TV advertisement expecting houses and cars on enlistment, just like those of the idyllic married-quarters story-board in the advertisement. Coal, gas and electricity are also big spenders (incidentally the Coal Board's Lord Robens is to become the next President of the Advertising Association) with a Tory Government's attitude to a national fuel policy exemplified in the competitive advertising of gas and electricity.

Blinding the Client with Science

Attempts can also be made to regain old clients' interest by re-vamping the jargon. One agency produced in the autumn of 1962 *The Measurement of Press Readership*, which casts doubts on the efficacy of the readership figures in the survey produced by the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising. This survey divides the population into socio-economic grades, and the proportion of these from AB (upper middle class) to DE (working class and those at lowest levels of subsistence) among a paper's readers is supposed to help the advertiser to decide if advertising in the paper will reach the kind of customers he is aiming at. "The Measurement of Press Readership" claimed that current figures of readership only gave the number of people who "looked at" any issue of a publication in a definite period, but did not convey the relative "intensity" of their reading. The agency carried out a special readership survey which showed that of people who were regular readers of a 'class' Sunday newspaper and of a Sunday popular as well, 43 per cent spent over an hour reading the class paper, and 3 per cent spent over an hour on the popular paper. All of which goes to show that "the degree of intensity with which people read papers greatly affects the degree of opportunities for exposure of advertisements that different papers offer." Or, if it's bulkier you'll take longer: whether you will notice what is advertised in those half-pages which make a convenient fold for propping against the marmalade pot is another matter.

Then there is the discovery by another agency, the Attitude Shift technique. Frankly admitting (in so far as the turgid vocabulary of advertising agents can ever be frank) that "the extent to which the results of research into the effectiveness of advertising can ever be translated into terms of sales, is, in most cases, unlikely to be high", the agency has developed a method of measuring "inherent selling power", based on the extent to which it has succeeded in improving the attitude of potential customers to the product. A weighted attitude scale, matched samples and a computer are involved, but a specified favourable shift in attitude still cannot be relied on to result in a given increase in sales volume.

Agencies are thus constantly in search for a new USP for themselves, USP for "unique selling propositions" being the gimmick of the American Ted Bates agency. Another big American agency, J. Walter Thompson, goes in for "the T-Square"—what, to whom, when, where and how are we selling? This agency produced a super-gimmick in October 1962, in the form of a supplement to *The Times* devoted to publicising its activities among Top People who might be expected to employ its services. This supplement, which contained a number of useful short articles describing how an advertising agency works, as well as direct puffs for J. Walter Thompson, was an excellent example of a form of press publicity which is on the increase. While the sophisticated *Times* reader would hardly suppose that this particular supplement was anything other than a puff for the J.W.T. Agency, similar supplements appearing in other newspapers, with pages of descriptive articles signed by staff journalists and surrounded by undisguised advertisements, could often be mistaken for news stories. The Advertising Standards Authority has recommended the banning of press advertisements appearing in the same "editorial-type" as news, but has not extended its criticism to these supplements built round hand-outs and write-ups, which are far more misleading.

New Fields for Expansion

J. Walter Thompson, like many of the other agencies referred to, is of course an American agency operating a London branch. Already by 1961, six of the top 15 British agencies were American-owned, and American influence has certainly not declined since then. It is also widespread in Europe generally, and great hopes were aroused both in American and British agencies by the promise of the Common Market, with a rush by both types to expand existing, or set up new, branches in a Europe ripe for exploitation: while the per capita expenditure on advertising in the United Kingdom, according to the J.W.T. supplement quoted above, is £9, and that in Western Germany is £7, in the Benelux countries it is only £4, in France £3 and in Italy £1. The breakdown of the Brussels negotiations was regarded by most of the agencies as equivalent only to a slowing down of their activities. New fields for advertising are also being sought in the newly-independent Commonwealth countries, and in trade journals of the Soviet Union and People's Democracies. By these means it is hoped to counteract the limiting effects of internal legislation and a possibly contracting U.K. market.

At home, ancillary services like market research and public relations work are being developed. Many agencies have formed subsidiary companies to provide these services, because they are remunerated on a special-fee basis paid by the advertiser, unlike the placing of advertisements in the press and on TV, where the owner of the medium

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provides the agency's remuneration in the form of commission. Public relations in particular offers great scope for development, since the work is often undertaken on behalf of non-commercial clients who have nothing so crude as a sales-curve to check its results by. This is the kind of activity which Mr. Harold Wilson had in mind when he referred to "high-powered, high-paid and largely anonymous groups. . . . There have been times when Sir Roy Welensky's P.R.O.s and those of Spain and Portugal, not to mention the Union Minière, have had more influence on Ministers and Government back-benchers than any debate in the House of Commons". Public relations work is directed to the general public as well, and often has far-reaching aims. "The P.R.O. who has been hired to do some non-political job like the promotion of trade or tourism finds sooner or later that the work extends to politics", says an article in the *Sunday Times* Colour Magazine, elucidating the political outlook of some of the main practitioners of P.R. One of them has a five-year contract with the Egyptian Government, another does the Shah of Persia, who "wants to be built up as a serious ruler". The latter also promotes KADU, the rival of KANU in Kenya: "We're trying to build them up . . . they only pay us a nominal fee but we don't lose anything". PR consultations tend to "identify" with their clients. "They" should not under any circumstances act for a foreign national whose government has an ideology alien to our own; says the President of the Institute of Public Relations. The head of the company which acts for Spain, Portugal and the Union Minière, the subject of Mr. Wilson's observations, is "an admirer of Franco. . . . But when Yugoslavia asked me to do their tourism, I told them I didn't like Commies". The gentleman who does Egypt "would not himself do East Germany". The gentleman who does "do" the G.D.R. says: "We wouldn't want to take on a purely political account. It's rather like religion, something people ought to make up their own minds about."

The idea that people ought to be left to make up their own minds unaided is precisely what advertising is *not* about, and there need be no quarrel with it on this account. The presentation of evidence on which a judgment may be arrived at, even the attempt to persuade people to a point of view, is a perfectly reputable activity and one that we all engage in, not least ourselves as propagandists for Communism. What we are entitled to criticise in present-day advertising are the classical faults of suppression of the true and suggestion of the false. Apart from public relations work, suppression of the truth is less significant, except where it takes the form of denial of the right of expression, as in the ITV ban on the *Daily Worker* (*not* imposed by the commercial side) or the refusal to exhibit anti-smoking posters. Suggestion of the false is far more serious, ranging from the claim of some skin preparation to "Bring back that Moist Misty Look", or the artful siting of cat food tins so that TV pussy always chooses the right one, through the benefits claimed for the consumption of tobacco or drink, to the general scale of values implicit in the content of advertising. These values are both cause and effect of the society in which we live, and by exposing their falsity we can do much towards our goal of changing that society. While advertising, and marketing in general, confines its claims to "shifting the demand curve between products", we can possibly learn something from its methods, insofar as these do not cancel each other out in self-contradictions. It is when its practitioners presume to speak as defenders of a free society that we see where its dangers, economic and social, really lie.

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Elizabethan Architecture and Art

Jack Lindsay

IT has always seemed surprising that the Elizabethan period, with its tremendous achievements in poetry, drama, and music, should have such a comparatively poor record in achitecture and art—particularly in painting.

Eric Mercer has now boldly tackled the problem in his *English Art*, 1553-1625,[1] and because he closely relates the art-trends to social developments, he makes them interesting in themselves and at the same time uses them to illuminate the whole situation of thought and expression in the period. Previously, discussion of the art and architecture has tended to attempt to cover the involved material with over-simplified generalisations or to get bogged down in the details. Foreign influences have been invoked without any explanation of the highly selective principle at work and of the reasons why so much of the available Italian, French, and Flemish models were disregarded or proved unassimilable. Mercer, by a careful analysis of the social and intellectual positions of the main patrons and leaders of taste, is able to grasp both a broad tendency and its complicated working-out. He brings out the entangled and sometimes contradictory interests and attitudes of the patrons, who were torn internally and drawn in opposed directions by their position as men of the Renaissance with its Italian roots and as men of the Reformation necessarily opposed to all that seemed originating from Rome, all that savoured of the cult of Saints or the Virgin, of idolatry.

The Tudors and their great servants, in carrying towards its climax the feudal State in the special conditions of England, felt a kinship with the other emerging absolutist States, but they could not express this relationship at all fully or directly. They looked back to medieval values and sanctions, while seeking to maintain their particular kind of reformed national Church closely tied up with the State it served and buttressed. A series of expansive impulses were thus closely linked with checks and compromises, which in architecture sought, not to imitate the Renaissance house of Italy with its attempt at classical symmetries and orders, but to develop the medieval mansion in new modified forms.[2]

[1] Oxford University Press, £2 15s.

Tudor Mansions

Mercer shows with fascinating clarity how the courtyard of medieval custom was transformed into the H- or half H-mansion of the Tudor gentry. Only at Longleat in Wiltshire, built by Sir Thomas Thynne and now showing as completed after a fire in 1567, do we meet the all-out effort to transport into the English landscape, in a grand form, the sort of mansion to be encountered in Italian towns. Longleat may have been admired more than Mercer admits, but one cannot controvert his claim that its ideas did not take root or stimulate imitation. It stands as a magnificent proof that the Tudor lords could have followed the style of the High Renaissance with powerful effect if they had wanted to—and that they did not want to.

The H-shaped house had an overwhelming appeal for it enabled its builders to effect a compromise between national tradition and the Renaissance without any sign of surrender to Rome. The medieval aspects of the inturned courtyard were dropped; for the lord no longer aimed at feudal self-sufficiency; he was an ambitious servant of the Crown, needing display and having to consider the problems of lodging the Court; but he was still a servant and must turn his gaze outward. An obeisance was made to the spirit of the epoch by the achievement of a considerable degree of structural symmetry in place of medieval asymmetrical elevation. The H-house, by providing long stretches of outer walling and by giving a chance for height, enabled its owner to infuse a certain Renaissance quality into elements that remained fundamentally traditional, "uniform", but with an effect gained by contrasted masses, and to make an impressive statement of his position in the State, in the world of money and power, without any feudal defiances. The wings

[2] For an account of the relation of Crown and courtier in the first decade of Elizabeth's reign, and of the limits of the political consciousness: W. T. MacCaffrey, *Past and Present*, April 1963.

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were long enough to take an extensive Gallery, which replaced the medieval Hall in importance; and though the main block tended to grow wider, with a reduction of the length of the wings, enough space was kept for the Long Gallery. For England a stroll there was preferable to a promenade in the Piazza; and its dimensions made it an excellent place for full-length portraits, in which the owner's pride of family and status as a Statist were set out. Going up the first floor, it brought about the grand staircase:

> "By the second decade of the seventeenth century a classic type-plan had been evolved, with a main block two rooms thick containing a well staircase and a one-storied transverse Hall, a Great Chamber above and a Gallery in a wing on the same floor." [3]

Architectural Ornament

Having thus established the key-trend, Mercer is able to show the link with all the variations that occur, particularly those that express different levels of status—down to such sturdy forms at a comparatively low social level as Woolmore Farm at Melsham, Wiltshire, or Toseland, Hunts (his plates 14*a* and *b*). Out of this exposition we gain a heightened understanding and appreciation of the large numbers of gabled houses dating from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century which our country can yet show; we grasp their relation to the complex struggle of infusing Renaissance ideas of symmetry into medieval systems.

Mercer then carries his analysis into the difficult and complicated matter of the architectural ornaments, showing that, contrary to the common view, sixteenth century houses were not externally overloaded. Elaboration went on inside, especially in the panellings, chimney-pieces, friezes and ceilings. In ornament the same conflict between traditional elements and classical ideas went on as in house-structures, with varying points of compromise or balance. Mercer's analysis of the problem of placing the chimneys is also striking. One interesting point is that the Puritans were particularly anti-Italian partisans of the English tradition; they tended to cling to the medieval outlook and to abstain from foreign motifs. "Thus the great Jacobean frontispieces of Oxford are unknown at Cambridge" with its more Puritan basis. "Indeed the only consistently Renaissance architecture at Cambridge prior to the accession of Charles I is in the work of Caius and the doorway traditionally ascribed to Sir Christopher Wren at Magdalene; Caius certainly had 'Romish' sympathies and Wray was far removed from the Puritan camp. Even in later years, when something, but not enough, had been done to purge Cambridge, its architecture never approached the Italianism of Oxford as revealed in the Botanic Gardens' gateway, the porch of St. Mary's, and the now destroyed gatehouse of Magdalen." [4] Indeed, the early seventeenth century achitecture of Cambridge was mainly in the sober, unassuming, sub-Gothic of many smaller houses of the time.

Portraits and Miniatures

We have no reason to regret in general that the Tudors did not follow the example of Longleat, for the result, despite certain impoverishments, was a genuinely national merging of late medieval elements with various Renaissance ideas and forms. Everyone has to live in a house, and so there was a wide variety in the working-out of the general trend at a number of social levels. But not everyone has to have his portrait painted or to collect pictures, and so the stereotyping forces which we see at work in architecture had almost complete control of the situation in the pictorial field.

Despite the work of Holbein, and later of the Fleming, Hans Eworth, there was no effective stimulation from abroad, and the growing power of the State was reflected in the tendency to make the portrait a political ikon. Aesthetically this meant an increasing attention to an elegance of pattern with Mannerist affinities, to symbols to status, to an encroachment of clothes upon personality, till only the face looks out with a sort of lost appeal from the dehumanised and abstracted totality. And this development came about despite the fine poetic talent of a miniaturist like Hilliard. (In the miniature something of a private refuge was found, but the genre could not help being affected by the general trend.) Only an amateur like Sir Nathaniel Bacon, with no close court-connections, was able to please himself, absorb fertilising elements from Italian and Dutch art, and produce work which in its limited way yet marks him as the greatest of our seventeenth century artists. He died in 1627 at the age of forty-one.

The changes in the political situation which drew the English Crown more into line with other absolute monarchies of Europe and tended to weaken its antagonism to "Romish" elements brought about the rise of the virtuosi and such intrusions as the Palladianism of Inigo Jones. But this insecure development lies largely outside the period treated by Mercer. However, the way in which this new trend grew up is an important verification of his general thesis.

[3] Mercer, 23.

[4] Mercer, 89.

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Popular Forces

Such an essentially Marxist treatment of art as is shown in his book may be expected to raise objections from the more conventional art-critic, and the review of his book in *The Times Literary Supplement* attempts to bring forward a number of counter-arguments.

> If (as he says) "the Tudor State was a fairly typical absolutism of the European pattern", why did painting and sculpture flourish in other such states, but not in England? Or if the "shallowness" of English painting was due to "the glorification of the absolute monarchy and its servants", why was not the poetry of *The Faerie Queen* and of Shakespeare's histories, equally "shallow"?

On the one hand, the social and political situation was not identical in the other absolutisms, where the Counter-Reformation after the Council of Trent was doing all it could to stimulate religious painting which would reach the masses, and where the attitudes to art could not but be incomparably broader than in Tudor England. In the latter country there was no pressure for, or method of, using art in a wide propaganda-field; church-building and church-painting had stopped; there was no way whereby the popular forces could modify or transform the abstracting ikon-tendency of an art dedicated to a hagiography of the Virgin Queen and a definition of noble status. Such broadening as came with the Stuarts was too late and too limited in its close attachment to a Court that was isolating itself and precipitating the Revolution.

On the other hand, in music, in poetry, and in drama, the popular forces were able to irrupt in different ways and degrees, and this applies even to a work like Spenser's epic, which despite the allegorising link with the Virgin cult and the general aristocratic tendencies of the epical romance of the period in Italy, was infused with a vast amount of other forces because it looked to a much wider audience—and looked in a different way—than the paintings did.

We can get some idea of the way in which the popular forces broke in if we look at the key-medium of the drama. We tend to forget that the literary glories of the Elizabethan period belong mainly to its last two decades. "The quite peculiar badness of much early Tudor poetry needs to be recollected," remarks M. C. Bradbrook.[5] "It was not merely dull and monotonous, like Lydgate; it was frankly monstrous. . . . Fantastic importations ranged from inkhorn Latinisms and quantitative metre to Petrarchan conceits and all the courtly flourishes that went with sonneteering, Italianate manners, and foreign attire."

An effort was being made to control the Renaissance material with a variety of imposed courtly and learned forms, but without the order that came about in painting through the definite political need it served. For the drama the crucial point appears in Lyly in the early 1580's, with his symmetrical forms and courtly rhetoric; if things had stayed at this point, we would have had a literature very close to what we find in the best painting and miniatures. But popular forces swung into action, even Lyly's own later work, and within a few years Greene, Peele, Marlowe and the early Shakespeare were vitally transforming and extending the situation.

Mercer's general thesis stands up unaffected by such carping comments as those cited above. In such a large field there is room for disagreement on detail and on shades of emphasis; and to substantiate the picture fully we need an account of English art from about 1400 on, which would show how far it was affected by, and remote from, the great developments going on on the Continent—with a linkage of the artistic tendencies with the social situation along the same lines as those used by Mercer in this book. That book, however, is a valiant and convincing effort to bring order into a very recalcitrant scene; and gives yet another proof of how illuminating Marxism can be when employed by a critic who thoroughly knows his field.

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[5] *The Growth and Structure of Elizabethan Comedy* (Peregrine, 1963, 42).

Discussion contribution on:

What Does Music Express?

Tom Russell

THERE is no doubt that Alan Bush is right when he claims that music expresses feelings, and that Stravinsky is wrong when he asserts the contrary. Indeed, it is extremely difficult to understand how the composer of *L'Oiseau de Feu, Pétrouchka* and *Le Sacre du Printemps,* brought up as he was on Russian folk song, can possibly deny what he himself has so often achieved. But

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if Stravinsky places himself at one extreme on the matter, he seems to be balanced by Richard Strauss at the other. I remember that many years ago a critic, I believe it was James Huneker, quoted Strauss as claiming that music could be made to express anything, even the domestic teaspoon—or was it a tablespoon? More recently, and more seriously, he is quoted by Ernst Krause[1] as saying: "I learnt long ago that in composing I am incapable of writing anything without a programme to guide me." Goethe made an important comment on this matter when he wrote: "To imitate thunder in music is not art, but the musician who can arouse in me the feeling I have in listening to it thundering would be very highly esteemed."

What Subject?

Between the extremes of Stravinsky and Strauss one has to tread carefully. Alan Bush says that: "The effect of a work of art is therefore to interest the consumer in *the subject of the work*, and to mould his feeling in the direction of his own feeling in regard to *the particular matter* which is being reflected" (my italics—T.R.). This may be relatively simple in the instance proposed above by Goethe, but in dealing with many other emotions the composer may find it hard to persuade the listener to identify and relate his feelings to a particular subject.

Alan Bush does not explain how, in music, he is to bring the listener to the subject of the work, or to the particular matter being reflected. In other arts, particularly literature, this may be reasonably straightforward, but it is far from being so in music. Strauss may tell you that in his symphonic poems, *Don Juan, Don Quixote* or, less concretely, *Death and Transfiguration,* the titles indicate the subject of each work, but for a listener unaware of these titles any of many other subjects might suit Strauss' reflection of feelings equally well. The problem revolves precisely around what the composer is writing about; his feelings may be clearly expressed, but in relation to what subject?

In a world still torn by class differences and their ideological expressions, the feelings expressed by a composer can be harnessed to subject matter far removed from the composer's intentions. It is, of course, most important that we should ascertain as nearly as we can what are or were the composer's intentions, and much of musicology is pursued with just this end. The private life and personal ideas of a Mozart or a Beethoven may have little value in themselves, but they become important in so far as they influence the musical expression. There is still a lively discussion going on as to the meaning of Wagner's music; has it a social revolutionary content, or did it contain the germ of Hitler's ideas? Similar doubts have occurred in the assessment of Mozart who, at one time, was regarded as little more than a Court entertainer, but who, in such a composition as the *Magic Flute,* gives expression to the fight for the freedom of the human personality.

These very doubts show how difficult it is to assess the meaning of music, even when we are well documented about the composer. There can even be a contradiction between the man and the artist in one and the same person; there is the classic case of Balzac who, an ardent royalist, gave expression in his works of the aspirations of the bourgeoisie. But even if we find ourselves unable to follow Alan Bush in believing that the composer can interest the listener in the particular matter which is being reflected, we cannot deny that music can and does express the strongest and broadest human emotions. Every listener recognises this from his own experience. The depth of feeling experienced by a particular listener will vary according to his receptiveness, though not necessarily according to his musicality. And this brings us to another important consideration.

The Subjective Reactions

There are musicians who claim that music has an objective language and that certain intervals and succession of notes have a clearly defined meaning. Michael Tippett once claimed that he could indicate in this way the precise significance of the actual note sequence in the Fifth Symphony of Beethoven. But it seemed to me that he overlooked a most important factor, the subjective reaction of a particular listener. There are eminent musicians who positively dislike some, if not all, the works of Beethoven. If he had been able to express explicitly all the feelings and qualities which many people detect in listening to his music, and if these feelings and qualities are the best and noblest in the human character, how could anyone dislike the music without being devoid of these qualities? And how is it that a composer may have a moderate success during his lifetime, be little heard of for many years and then become immensely popular over the greater part of the world?

The relative neglect from which Bach suffered after his death may have been due to a number of natural causes: his own method of putting his works on one side once they had served their immediate purpose; the greater renown and publicity consciousness of his less gifted sons; and, perhaps, the toughness of his musical thought for

[1] Ernst Krause: *Richard Strauss Gestalt und Werk* (VEB Breitkopf und Härtel).

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the less cultured listeners who were coming into power. But the difference between the estimation of Mozart in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries could be a useful time study. The meaning of music, and its power to express that meaning, does appear then to depend on a conjunction of composer, listener, time and place of performance. And one must add, in most instances, the interpreter, for a conductor, an instrumentalist or a singer may subtly distort or, at least, divert the particular expression of a musical work.

These are variable factors, and the meaning of a particular work of music may vary in consequence. I have elsewhere raised a problem to which no explanation I have yet heard provides anything like a satisfactory answer. How is is that the same musical composition can be performed and enjoyed by people living under entirely different, even opposed, social systems, its meaning being differently apprehended in each? How could the Fifth Symphony of Beethoven be the "victory" symphony for Churchill, aiming to preserve British capitalism, an encouragement for the Nazis who sought world domination by any conceivable means, and, one assumes, a steeling influence for the Soviet citizens, whose objective was the final defeat of fascism and all its horrors?

Alan Bush quotes with approval Deryck Cooke's division of listeners into groups, the musical and the unmusical. But this division is too absolute. There are innumerable gradations of musicality, and some listeners will respond more or less deeply to whatever meaning this music may have, and they may respond in a different way. If, as Hindemith says, "music evokes . . . the images, memories of feelings", he indicates that music works largely by association of ideas, of sounds, of intervals and so on. Since our individual backgrounds must show as much variety, so our interpretation of the meaning of any music is likely to be coloured by this variety.

National Characteristics?

This might suggest some support for the theory of Boris Asaviev that music must have national characteristics. There is little doubt that, superficially at least, music does have national characteristics, but even if Alan Bush's own remark that a composer's feelings "will be associated and moulded by the particular social consciousness which has been developed in him in his childhood and by his education and traditional cultural influences" appears true, it can still be asked to what extent this will affect the understanding of the meaning of the music he writes.

It is begging the question to attempt a literary parallel as Alan Bush does when he writes: "No literary artist would suggest that an English writer could express himself more truthfully if he moulded his phraseology on a reflection of German grammar and syntax." Carlyle, in fact, did something of the sort, and not without success, and writers like George Moore and, more recently, Beckett, have chosen to write in French because they were living in France. These are, of course, exceptions, but they indicate something of the problem. What is the musical determination behind the experience of many of us? We grew up not to hear an English musical language, for we heard little or none of our own folk song, and what reached us was titivated out of its origins; what we heard was in the main a German musical language, imported during the nineteenth and earlier centuries, copied slavishly by our composers of the period and imbibed by all those of my generation as if it were the normal language. It would be mechanical for anyone so educated to adopt artificially a so-called English musical language.

In a similar way, the average listener to music in this country has been brought up on a diet of foreign produced music, and it is no accident that the two most popular composers in this country are the German, Beethoven and the Russian, Tchaikovsky. Both speak a language understood across the world, whereas Elgar and Vaughan Williams, the one unconsciously and the other with more awareness of what he was doing, produced what could be called English music; and the British public displays a singular lack of enthusiasm for either. This is also no accident. It means that where a composer succeeds in expressing a universal human emotion it will be recognised and welcomed wherever human beings listen or perform music, and the national "intonation" will prove to be no hindrance to its travels round the world. To anyone who has seen a Chinese audience reacting to a Puccini opera, performed exclusively by their own compatriots, will have doubts about the "intonation" theory, and even recognise the danger that this threatens the international aspect of music. The fact that Beethoven can speak direct to an audience in this country while Goethe has to suffer at the hands of a translator, however gifted, is a measure of this danger.

"Intonations" Theory

Perhaps I am taking Alan Bush farther than he intends to go, but unless the question of "intonations" is a superficial one it can only become a barrier. As it is, such national differences are usually ignored in practice. Janacek is one of the most outstanding composers who founded his

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music upon the speech rhythms of his own people, and the dissemination of his music was delayed as a consequence. But what has been the result? His operas have been translated; *Katya Kabanova* can be heard in English at Sadler's Wells, or in German in Leipzig, and seems to lose little in the process. The *music,* based on Janacek's own language, has to adapt itself to another language and becomes, surely, universal.

For Alan Bush to argue that this assertion of the essential need for the composer to have national characteristics "is an inevitable implication of Marxist theory" seems thoroughly far-fetched to me, and would not bear close examination. It is true that he ends his article by saying that: "It would be beyond the scope of this article to discuss the problem of how, in Britain today, we can pursue most clearly and straightforwardly the aim of developing the English, Scottish and Welsh schools of music, etc.," but I think we have the right to ask him to do precisely that as soon as possible. I, for one, am not convinced by the Asaviev theory, nor by Alan Bush's way of expounding it. Perhaps I have misunderstood it, but as far as I have gone with it I am perturbed by many of its implications.

Words and Music

The mention of Janacek brings up a final question, the confusion of words and music. The alliance of the two gives a clear picture of what the composer is aiming to express in his music, and it is much easier for him to convince us of his meaning, and we can judge more readily the measure of his success. Nevertheless, we often ascribe meaning to music set to words which resides only in the words, and which would not have had the same meaning for us if the words had been absent. We tend indeed to associate the meaning of the words with the music, and only begin to have doubts when we hear the music used in conjunction with different words. I have mentioned elsewhere the problem created by the use of a sentimental German theme for the "Red Flag", but who, had they heard the music without the words, would recognise in the placid notes of our national anthem the proud boasts which it contains and which, even when the music is played by a brass band without singers, will cause millions of patriotic Britishers to stand to attention, confident that the music itself expresses the emotions they are experiencing only by association?

We have to go a long way yet to clarify these issues. One can only be grateful to Alan Bush for, among many other things, having started a discussion. If we find some of his statements too confident, if he seems to find a Marxist basis for some of the assertions which we find difficult to accept, it can only be a challenge to do some more thinking. And thinking about music, especially for those of us who think in words, is no light task.

Songs of the Radical and Labour Movement

ONE good Chartist song, as Chartist songs go, seems to have been passed over both by Y. V. Kovalev in his *Anthology of Chartist Literature* and by John Miller in his article on *Songs of the British Radical and Labour Movement* (*Marxism Today*, June 1963) and also in his companion article published simultaneously as No. 30 of *Our History*.

It's a song called *There's a Good Time Coming, Boys,* a characteristic mixture of revolutionary zeal and reformist jitters. What distinguishes it from run-of-the-mill Chartist poems and songs is that it is not mock-literary. It is apparent from John Miller's and Y. V. Kovalev's selections that a very small proportion of the would-be literary poems of Chartism actually made the grade, although the superb rhetoric of songs like *A Hundred Years, A Thousand Years* makes even Shelley look pale. But credit should be given for songs like this one which, although by no means free of jargon, are relatively unpretentious:

There's a good time coming, boys—
A good time coming—
We may not live to see the day,
But earth shall glisten in the ray,
Of the good time coming.
Cannon balls may aid the truth,
But thought's a weapon stronger—

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We'll win our battle by its aid—
Wait a little longer.
There's a good time, &c.

There's a good time coming, boys—
A good time coming—
The pen shall supersede the sword,
And right, not might, shall be the lord,
In the good time coming.
Worth, not birth, shall rule mankind,
And be acknowledged stronger—
The proper impulse has been given—
Wait a little longer.
There's a good time, &c.

There's a good time coming, boys—
A good time coming—
And a poor man's family
Shall not be his misery,
In the good time coming;
Every child shall be a help,
To make his right arm stronger,
The happier he, the more he has—
Wait a little longer.
There's a good time, &c.

There's a good time coming, boys—
A good time coming—
Little children shall not toil,
Under or above the soil,
In the good time coming.
But shall play in healthful fields,
Till limbs and mind grow stronger—
And every one shall read and write—
Wait a little longer.
There's a good time, &c.

And so on for another two stanzas. The eccentric verse structure suggests that it goes to a popular tune; and it may also be that the words are a serious parody of an earlier song—certainly the chorus is noticeably beerier than the rest of the song and may therefore be borrowed.

Comic Versions

I don't know whether *There's a Good Time Coming, Boys* was ever published in Chartist journals. It appears quite frequently as a broadside. A "comic" version of it, evidently derived from the music-halls, was published in the *Great Exhibition Songster* of 1851. It makes an instructive comparison with the Chartist version, because although it seemingly shares the same ideals, the lumpen loyalist attitudes that culminated in Mafeking Night are already breaking through—and this twenty-five years before they began singing "We don't want to fight, but by Jingo, if we do. . . ." Here are some extracts:

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming;
We might not live to see the day,
But then our little babies may,
In the good time coming,
When ev'ry one will be so rich,
With long purse come out stronger,
Of Work, catch any doing a stitch—
Wait a little longer.
There's a good time, &c.

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming,
When all things English thro' the land
Shall, 'stead of foreign, take their stand,
In the good time coming,
When Royalty shall patronise
The British Drama stronger,
And with Billy Shakespeare fraternise—
Wait a little longer.
There's a good time, &c.

(Popular songs in the 1840s were often torn between chauvinistic loyalty to the queen and chauvinistic contempt for Albert.)

There's a good time coming, boys,
A good time coming.
When British gardens, say it we,
From weeds seditious shall be free,
In the good time coming.
Peace shall guide the great machine,
The feeble from the stronger
We'll shield, and shout "God Save the Queen—"
Wait a little longer.
There's a good time, &c.

Whether this is a parody of the Chartist song or both are parodies of a third song I haven t been able to ascertain. Can any readers of *Marxism Today* shed light on this? The Chartist version looks extremely singable too. Does anyone know the tune?

Literary comparisons of this kind are not mere pedantry. The vulgarity of the "comic" version of this song, looked at as literature, is part of the social history of the last century. So is the misfiring eloquence of much Chartist literature. It may be of small literary interest in itself, but it is a stern warning, in literary terms, of the menace of pure liberalism. Serious criticism, comparison and evaluation of the Labour movement's literature, which the work of researchers like Y. V. Kovalev, A. L. Lloyd, John Miller and many others is now making possible, can teach us an awful lot of lessons.

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